

Gandhi Memorial College Of Education Bantalab Jammu

Galsworthy

# JUSTICE

R. L. VARSHNEY



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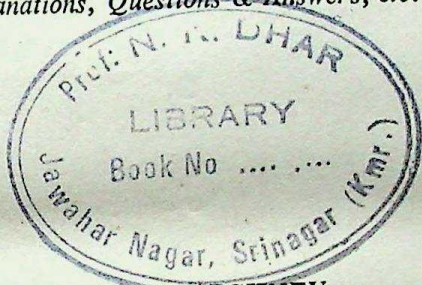


*Narain's University Series of English Literature, No. 102*

JOHN GALSWORTHY  
**JUSTICE**

EDITED WITH

*Critical Introduction, Text with Paraphrase, Detailed Summary,  
Select Literary Criticism, Notes & Annotations, Important  
Explanations, Questions & Answers, etc.*



**Dr. R. L. VARSHNEY**

*Revised by*

**Prof. S. S. MATHUR, M. A.**

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## GENERAL INTRODUCTION

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### I

#### THE AGE OF GALSWORTHY

When Galsworthy started writing in the nineties of the last century England, nay all Europe, was going through radical changes in all spheres of human thought and activity. Whereas the Victorian age was a period of smug self-satisfaction, the modern age which began in the late 1890's is a period of anxiety, questioning and frustration. As R. C. Churchill has said, "The nineties saw the rise of the new commercial imperialism ; the decline of the old journalism and the beginning of the new, the end of the aesthetic movement and the rapid rise from small beginning in the late eighties of the Fabian Movement, of informed social criticism, the decline of Victorian melodrama and the gaining popularity of the problem play ; the passing of Victorian insularity and the rising influence of continental ideas ; the decline in Orthodox religion and morality and the increasing prevalence of that less Puritan way of life which had previously been the vogue only among isolated individuals and coteries."

Popular education and popular journalism helped a great deal in transforming the country. The bondage of conventions came to an end. Parental authority was reduced. Women's emancipation was speeded up. Matthew Arnold hailed the new age in the following words :

"Bards make new poems ;  
Thinkers new schools ;  
Statesmen new systems ;  
Critics new rules ;  
All things begin again."

Democracy was further strengthened in England. There was unparalleled industrial progress and prosperity. A strong middle class developed in the body politic. There were new thinkers and writers like Shaw, Hardy, T.S. Eliot, Butler, Wells, Galsworthy and numerous others.

When the First World War started there was a great wave of idealism. It was a war to end all wars and make the world safe for



democracy. But within two years this idealism disappeared. War appeared to be only cold blooded massacre. A mood of anxiety, frustration and disillusionment prevailed among the youths of the nation. Europe had become a wasteland.

The social and economic emancipation of women led to a severe criticism of the prevailing standards of sexual conduct and morality. "A new type of woman, bold, self-confident, aggressive and contemptuous of sweet domesticity, began to figure in the literature and social life of the age". Some people expressed revolutionary ideas regarding the relations of men and women. Some persons even advocated free sex. According to them marriage was only legalised prostitution. D.H. Lawrence suggested that people should think about sex freely, completely, honestly and cleanly. Marriage was regarded as only a social contract. Shaw suggested that divorce should be made very easy.

There was a wave of realism. Hardy and his followers looked at the darker side of things.

British drama was greatly influenced by Ibsen. Under his influence social, political, economic and moral problems began to be discussed in plays.

Religion began to lose its grip on human minds. Marxism and materialism dominated the discussions. There was the reign of reason and sentiments were suspect.

This age witnessed the decline of poetry and an unprecedented growth of the novel and drama. Science and psychology dominated all aspects of life and literature.



## II

### GALSWORTHY'S PREDECESSORS

#### The Decline of Drama

The Elizabethan age was a golden period of British drama. Shakespeare, Ben Jonson, Marlow, Webster and a host of eminent playwrights took British drama to dizzy heights. But by the thirties of the seventeenth century drama began to decline. The Puritans closed the theatres in 1642. When they were reopened after the restoration of Charles II, drama took its cue from the king and the court and became extremely licentious. It reflected the life of the court and became cut off from the main stream of British life.

Real comedy was revived in the eighteenth century by Goldsmith and Sheridan. But after that drama again sank to a low level. The early nineteenth century was a period of great poetry but not of great drama. Great lyrics were produced by poets who were highly subjective in outlook. Drama requires objectivity. Wordsworth,



Shelley, Keats, Byron, Southey and Lamb, all wrote plays but they could not create living characters different from their own selves. The heroes of Shelley's plays became true copies of Shelley. Byron's characters all became Byronic. These plays could not be acted on the stage. They could only be read in the closet. So they came to be known as "Closet Plays". Stage managers employed mediocre writers to produce some plays to be acted. But they only produced trash. Good novels were written by a large number of writers like Scott, Dickens, Thackeray, Jane Austen and others and so people preferred to sit at home and read them. In the middle of the nineteenth century Matthew Arnold wrote : "In England we have no drama at all."

### The Beginning of Realistic Drama

Modern realistic drama began in England with the writing of *Caste* in 1867 by T. W. Robertson. He began life as an actor and then started writing plays. He knew life and he knew the stage well. So he introduced realistic situations and living characters in plays which are remarkable for their craftsmanship. His plays presented the point of view of the rising Victorian middle class in England. He could not rise above conventions but he brought naturalism to the British stage.

Robertson was followed by Arthur Pinero. He wrote a number of realistic domestic dramas like *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray*. He introduced new technical methods in British drama. He does not believe in conventions but deals with realistic situations. With him character is destiny.

A real advance in realistic drama was made by Henry Arthur Jones. In his *Saints and Sinners* he satirised the false beliefs and the commercialism of the English middle class. He was a social reformer. He regarded drama as a criticism of life.

Towards the end of the nineteenth century Oscar Wilde started delighting British audiences with his comedy of manners. He was weak in characterization but knew how to create humorous situations. His dialogue is full of witty and paradoxical statements which send audiences to roars of laughter. Entertainment was his one aim and he was not concerned with social problems. *The Importance of Being Earnest* has continued to delight audiences to this day.

### Ibsen

But the person who revolutionised British drama was a Norwegian dramatist, Henrik Ibsen by name. He started introducing contemporary problems in his plays.

Ibsen was a Norwegian dramatist who created a sensation in the literary circles of Europe by publishing in 1879 a play called *A Doll's House*. The play begins in a traditional manner and proceeds on in the traditional way till the middle of the last Act and then there is a sudden change which heralded the Drama of Ideas.



Nora, the heroine, is the beautiful wife of Torwald Helmer and the mother of three children. Her husband had always treated her like a doll. She borrowed some money from Krogstad and forged a signature on the bond. Krogstad is working in a bank of which Helmer is the manager. Krogstad is guilty of a forgery for which he is to be dismissed from the bank. He tells Nora that she must persuade her husband not to dismiss him, otherwise he would expose her forgery to her husband. He is, however, dismissed. He now writes to Helmer what his wife had done. Helmer is furious with his wife. Just then the forged bond is sent to her by a friend. So her reputation is saved. In a traditional play the husband and wife would have rushed into each other's arms and lived happily ever after. But not so here. They sit down and discuss seriously their relations with each other. She is not prepared to be treated as a doll any longer. She determines to become economically and mentally independent and she sweeps out of the house leaving her husband and children behind.

This Discussion Scene disturbed a thousand homes and created a storm in literary circles throughout Europe.

Ibsen then wrote *Ghosts* in which he discussed the problem of hereditary disease. His other plays that followed discussed the various problems of society.

In 1889 *A Doll's House* was produced in England as translated by William Archer. It created an uproar. Many critics condemned Ibsen. They argued that a discussion or a debate had no place in a drama. But Shaw strongly supported Ibsen. He wrote *The Quintessence of Ibsenism* in support of Ibsen's dramatic practice.

### G. B. Shaw

George Bernard Shaw started writing plays himself to demonstrate that problem plays of the type that Ibsen was writing could succeed on the stage. In his plays there was no action on the stage. There was only dialogue and discussion of problems. And yet the plays were a great success on the stage. The reason was that the plays provided to the audience an intellectual feast of wit and humour.

Shaw wrote *Widowers' Houses* on the problem of slum landlordism and he wrote *Mrs. Warren's Profession* on prostitution. *The Philanderer* and *Getting Married* were written on the problems of marriage. *Arms and the Man* was an anti-romantic comedy which threw a searchlight of reason on the problems of love and war. In *Candida* he wrote a domestic drama in the style of Ibsen. Here he presented the eternal triangle in a new light. *Man and Superman* is a long play dealing with Shaw's theory of Creative Evolution. The purpose of the Life Force is to create better human beings and woman is its agent for the achievement of this purpose. Major Barbara shows the power of the capitalists. It is they who finance religions and institutions like the Salvation Army. *The Doctor's Dilemma* deals with the whims and follies of doctors. In *Pygmalion* he showed that a charming play could be written on the dry subject of phonetics



and spellings reform. In *Saint Joan* he presented the life of Joan of Arc of France as a problem play. She liberated France but was burnt alive as a witch. According to Shaw she was the first Protestant; she was the pioneer of nationalism and also the pioneer of the new art of warfare. She was far ahead of her time. She was like a person with eyes in a land of the blind. Naturally the blind people decided to kill her.

All the plays of Shaw presented the various problems realistically.

St. John Hankin, Stanley Houghton and Granville Barker also wrote problem plays in a realistic vein.

This was the state of British drama when Galsworthy came to the stage in 1906.



### III

#### GALSWORTHY'S LIFE

John Galsworthy was one of the leading literary figures of England in the first quarter of this century. He was a prolific writer and he wrote poems, plays, novles, and short stories but his fame chiefly rests on his *Forsyte Saga* and his social tragedies. He was born with the proverbial silver spoon in his mouth and he did not have to struggle with poverty, as Shaw, for instance, had to do. But he did not have the typical rich man's attitude towards life. He had genuine sympathy with the under-dog and he used his pen to rouse the conscience of the world regarding the sufferings of the individuals due to our vicious social, economic and legal practices and conventions.

John Galsworthy was born on the 14th of August, 1867, in a Victorian mansion amid the woods of Coombe Surrey at Kingston Hill. His father, also named John Galsworthy, was a practising solicitor in London. He was a wealthy man and had the refinement and culture of the best British aristocrats. The portrait of Old Jolyon in *Forsyte Saga* bears considerable resemblance to the senior Galsworthy. Galsworthy had great respect and admiration for his father.

Galsworthy enjoyed all those advantages and privileges which are available to the sons of rich parents. He had his early education at a preparatory school at Bournemouth and was then sent to the famous public School at Harrow. There he did well in studies but was not an outstanding scholar. He distinguished himself as an athlete and runner. He was Captain of the School football team and the Head of his House. He did not take much interest in literary pursuits and from his career at Harrow no one could guess that one day he would turn out to be a world famous novelist and dramatist.

From Harrow he went to Oxford and he graduated with Honours in law from New College in 1889. He thus had the best



education available in England. He got the best out of the institutions where he studied and they did not make him a snob, as these institutions are reputed to do. He had a warm heart and he was deeply touched by the sufferings of the poor, the infirm and the outcasts. He had experience of these when he went to collect rent on his father's property. These experiences found a place in his works in later life.

His father wanted to make him a barrister. He was called to the bar in 1890 but he practised very little. "I read," he says, in various chambers, practised almost not at all, and disliked my profession thoroughly." Law courts were very boring to him. He was, however, well acquainted with legal procedures and he has beautifully depicted court scenes in many of his plays.

His father sent him to Canada to investigate the affairs of a mine and to the South Seas and New Zealand, to learn something of navigation, with a view to the Admiralty bar. He had no dearth of money and he developed a wander-lust and he travelled round the world for two years. During his voyages he read Dickens, Turgenev, Maupassant, Tolstoy and Ibsen and they influenced him greatly. On his way home from Australia, in the sailing ship *Iorrens*, he formed the friendship of the great Polish sailor novelist, Joseph Conrad.

But neither the authors whom he read nor Joseph Conrad could ignite the spark of authorship in Galsworthy. This credit goes to Ada who was in those days the wife of his cousin, Arthur. He met her only a week after her marriage to Arthur. A warm friendship grew up between them which soon blossomed into romantic love. She left her husband but John could not marry her because divorce proceedings would have brought disgrace to the family and he did not want to give pain to his father.

They waited for twelve years. The senior Galsworthy died in 1904 and Ada and John were married in 1905. She created in him the desire to write. He writes, "If one has been brought up at an English public school and university, is addicted to sport and travel, has a small independent income, and is a briefless barrister, one will not take literature seriously, but one might like to please her of whom one is fond. I began. In two years I wrote nine tales. They had every fault." A critic says, "We might never have got anything from him except an account of local fox hounds had it not been for Ada." He acknowledged his debt to Ada in his dedication to the *Forsyte Saga*. He called her "the most dearest and lovely companion, the most faithful helpmate, and the best natural critic a man ever had". She was a source of encouragement and inspiration to him and she acted as his secretary and critic throughout his literary career. They had no children but they led very happy lives in mutual love and admiration.



His literary career began in 1897 with the publication of *From the Four Winds*, a collection of short stories. This was followed by two novels and another collection of stories. They were published under the pseudonym, John Sinjohn. They were merely literary exercises and were not noticed by the critics at all. Galsworthy made a mark on the literary scene with the appearance of *The Silver Box* in 1906. Plays and stories now came from his pen in quick succession. By the end of the thirties of this century he had to his credit thirty volumes of poems, plays, novels and short stories.

Galsworthy was a great social reformer and philanthropist. He was full of humanism. He loved all living beings including our 'dumb brethren'. He had tremendous sympathy for the poor and the sufferers. He was modest and reserved by temperament. He had no conceit or vanity. He was sweet-tempered, amiable and kind-hearted. He was humble and courteous. He was very generous by temperament. He hated rumours and scandals and never uttered a harsh word for anyone.

During the first World War he worked hard for the relief of wounded British soldiers. In recognition of his contribution to literature and his public service he was offered a knighthood in 1918, but he declined it because he felt that "literature is its own reward". He felt that a title of this type was not appropriate to the profession of literature. But he accepted literary honours. In 1921 he was made the first President of the London centre of the P.E.N., a world-wide organization of Poets, Playwrights, Essayists and Novelists. In 1929 he was awarded the Order of Merit. In 1932 he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature. He received honorary degrees from his own Oxford University and many other universities.

Galsworthy passed his last days quietly in his country home in Sussex like a typical country squire. He enjoyed music and the company of his large 'family' of cats and dogs. He was very fond of horses and loved to ride even in his old age. He died at Grove Lodge on the 31st of January, 1933, and his ashes, according to his directions, were scattered to the winds.

John Hampden's remark about Galsworthy is worth quoting. He says, "Since his death in 1933, the level of his popularity has remained remarkably constant. He depicted an epoch of smug conventions and social injustices with incisive clarity; and he depicted facets of the English character inherent in that Epoch, and the social system that typified it, without either animosity or fulsome indulgence. If the word 'genius' is denied him—he would certainly never have claimed it—he can never be denied the less controversial qualities of sincerity, sympathy and superb craftsmanship".





## IV

## HIS PERSONALITY AND CHARACTER

**His appearance**

"Galsworthy is about medium height", wrote Frank Harris, "spare of habit and vigorous, his head long, well shaped ; his features fairly regular, a straight nose, high forehead ; he is almost completely bald and wears glasses. Seen close to, his face becomes more interesting ; the serious blue eyes can laugh ; the lips are large and well cut promising a good deal of feeling but the characteristic expression of the face is seriousness and sincerity."

**Typical Englishman**

He was a typical Englishman. He loved England and was jealous of his country's honour and accepted with great seriousness his responsibility as an English citizen. He loved the English countryside, which evoked in him deeper emotion than the more spectacular beauty of other lands.

In his writings he confined himself to English characters and English scenes. The themes of his plays were the problems that were faced by the English people in those days.

But Galsworthy's patriotism was not of a narrow variety. He did not believe in the superiority of the Englishman over other races. He did not believe that it was the Englishman's right to rule over "the lesser breeds without the law."

He had all the nobler qualities of English character. He was reserved and exercised great self-control. He had the typical Englishman's instinct for fair play and justice to all.

In 1921 he was made the first President of the London centre of the P. E. N., an international fraternity of writers and he worked hard up to the end of his days for its goal of international goodwill and understanding. When he got the Nobel Prize he passed on the entire money for the promotion of the noble ideals of the P. E. N.

**His generosity**

He was generous by temperament. He lived on less than half his income and gave the rest in charity. He helped his needy relations and gave small pensions to a lot of poor old people. During the war he and his wife served in a military hospital and gave all possible help to the wounded.

**His religion**

He was against the fights between the Christians and the Jews on the basis of religion. He was against dogma in religion. His religion consisted of sincerity, truthfulness and kindness to all.



### Kindness to animals

His kindness was not confined to human beings only. He loved animals and pleaded for humane treatment to them. In the beginning he was fond of hunting but then he gave it up because he realized that what was sport for man was tragedy for the birds and beasts. He visited slaughter houses and advocated painless killing of animals. In his country house he had a large 'family' of horses, cats and dogs.

### His sympathy

He hated all forms of tyranny and oppression. All his writings show his sympathy for the poor and the under-dog. In many of his plays he brought out the sufferings of the victims of social wrongs. He had a warm heart and it went out in sympathy with those individuals who were crushed down by the brute majority. He raised his voice against men who treated women as their property. He opposed all class conflicts and wanted equity and justice to be practised in the relations between men and men, and men and women.

### His self-control and impartiality

At the University of Oxford he acquired the Oxfordman's habit of reasonable hesitation—the open mind which sees both sides of every question. In most controversies he was unwilling to take sides, and one could almost see the balance in his mind swinging this way and that. In his plays he is absolutely impartial in stating the case for capital as well as labour, for the rich as well as the poor, for the aristocrats and the industrialists.

He was reserved and modest. He was sweet-tempered and nobody ever heard him utter a harsh or unkind word. Only gross cruelty, particularly towards helpless animals roused his anger. The desire to help and serve others was an obsession with him. His deep silence, perfect self-control and dignified reserve were often mistaken by casual visitors for dryness and aloofness.

He thirsted for beauty and had a keen eye for it. He loved nature and lived like a country squire in his country house in the midst of nature. He loved paintings and his house was adorned with them.

### Kindness and courage

Galsworthy's faith is best summed up in the following lines of Adam Lindsay Gordon, which particularly appealed to him and which he often liked to quote :

"Life is mostly froth and bubble ;  
Two things stand like stone ;  
Kindness in another's trouble  
Courage in your own."





## V

## HIS WORK

From Galsworthy's career at Harrow and Oxford one could never conjecture that he would one day turn out to be one of the great writers of his time and would get the Nobel Prize for Literature.

In those early years he was more interested in sport than in literature. He did not write anything till he was 28. He says, "If one has been brought up at an English public school and university, is addicted to sport and travel, has a small independent income, and is a briefless barrister, one will not take literature seriously, but one might like to please her of whom one was fond. I began. In two years I wrote nine tales. They have every fault." This lady was Ada. She had just become his cousin's wife when he first met her. They fell in love with each other and were married twelve years later. Her words, "Why don't you write? You are just the person," ignited the spark of authorship in him.

His literary career began in 1897 with the publication of a volume of stories entitled *From the Four Winds* under the pseudonym, John Sinjohn (John son of John). This was a sort of first exercise and was later withdrawn from circulation. His first novel, *Jocelyn* was published in 1899. *Salvation of a Forsyte* appeared in 1901. A number of other novels and sketches appeared between 1900 and 1903. In 1904 *The Island Pharisees* appeared under Galsworthy's own name.

*The Man of Property* appeared in 1906. This gave Galsworthy an honourable position in the literary circles of England. The narrative of the Forsyte family occupied him for twenty-six years. He wrote *Indian Summer of a Forsyte*, *In Chancery* (1920), *Awakening and To Lei* (1921). These stories take us thorough three generations of the Forsyte family and were collected together as the *Forsyte Saga* in 1922. This made him a famous novelist.

*The Silver Box*, Galsworthy's first play was published in 1906. Other plays followed in quick succession. *Joy*, a comedy, was published in 1907. *Strife* came in 1909 and *Justice* in 1910. He wrote seven more plays during the next ten years. *The Skin Game* appeared in 1920 and *Loyalties* in 1922.

The Forsyte group was then continued and *The White Monkey* appeared in 1924, *Silent Wooing* and *The Silver Spoon* in 1926, *Passers By* and *The Swan* in 1928 and *On Forsyte Change* in 1930. These novels were collected together under the title, *The Modern Comedy* and they form a sequel to *The Forsyte Saga*.

*The Forsyte Saga* ranks as one of the great works of the modern age. In it he has truthfully rendered the life of the upper middle class English family in the later half of the Nineteenth and the first quarter of the Twentieth Century. Scames Forsyte is a pattern of the moneyed respectability.



The question now arises why Galsworthy started writing plays instead of perfecting his novels. His plays are written on the same themes as his novels. In his plays he took up the same criticism of social evils as he had voiced in his novels earlier. Then why did he change his medium? Perhaps the reason was that the more concentrated and more plastic medium of drama gave his powers of character analysis and dialogue writing greater scope, and he could more effectively bring home to his audience the ideals he stood for in matters of social reform. Drama gave him one more advantage. That was that in drama he could cover a certain flatness in his minor characters whose weak characterization was concealed behind the skilful acting of the good actors.

In his novels as well as in his plays Galsworthy presented the problems of the age with remarkable faithfulness. His warm heart melted in sympathy with the poor, the oppressed, the under-dog, The English countryside, its charms and its problems, are beautifully depicted in all his writings. Domestic problems, love, poverty, injustice, tyranny and the inordinate love of wealth, are the themes of his novels as well as his plays. His characters are all life-like. His prose style is lively and vivacious. The result is that the Forsyte group of novels and his plays like *Justice*, *The Silver Box*, *Strife*, and *Loyalties* are immortal works and will continue to be read long after the problems dealt with in them have ceased to worry people's minds.

Galsworthy also wrote about a hundred poems. Many of them appeared in periodicals and a collection was published in 1912 under the title "Moods, Songs and Doggerels". Another volume entitled, 'Verses, New and Old' appeared in 1926. None of the poems is great as a poem but they are interesting because they reveal his personality and his philosophy of life. Poetry is the expression of deep emotion. It cannot be written by a person like Galsworthy who was cold, impartial, judicial and self-controlled. His qualities suited prose better. His poems have already been forgotten, But he ranks as one of the great novelists and dramatists of our time.



## VI

### HIS CHARACTER, QUALITIES AND THEIR IMPACT ON HIS PLAYS

Galsworthy's plays were shaped by his own character and qualities. The themes of his plays were taken from the problems, conflicts and clashes that he saw in the life around him. But his method of dealing with these themes differed from that of other dramatists like Shaw. Galsworthy was a serious minded observer of the life around him and he dealt with his problems objectively and set forth both sides of the



case with perfect impartiality. Shaw had a clear didactic purpose and he used all his wit and humour, irony and sarcasm, to bring the world round to his point of view. Galsworthy had nothing to teach. His plays were marked by his qualities of modesty, sincerity, sympathy and impartiality.

### A typical English gentleman

Galsworthy was a typical English country gentleman and he displayed in his plays all the noble qualities which English gentlemen are supposed to have. He had travelled all over the world but all his plays are cast in England. The themes are English and his plays are all English. He wanted to describe English society intimately. He did not describe the glories of old England. He described English society as it was in his time. His patriotism was not narrow-minded. He considered it his duty to expose its blemishes mercilessly. He did not allow his national pride to conceal anything ugly in this society.

One quality of an English gentleman is that he has an instinctive sense of fairness. This feeling Galsworthy has. In his plays he is fair to all parties. He does not exaggerate the good man's virtues or the bad man's vices. That is why there are no heroes and no villains in his plays. In *Justice* he shows the cruelty of the English judicial system and the destruction of innocent lives that it causes without presenting a single villain. He is fair to all. The employers do their duty. The advocates plead the case well. The judge gives a fair judgment on the basis of the evidence before him. The jailor and the doctor do their duty. And yet a life is ruined. The real villain is society and not any individual.

### Sympathy

Galsworthy was a humanist. He had tremendous sympathy for the poor, the under-dog, down-trodden, the outcast. He felt that most of the troubles of our life are due to the lack of sympathy. His heart melted with pity at the sufferings of every created being. He writes in *Another Sheaf*: "It is not the artist's business to preach. His business is to portray, but portray truly he cannot if he is devoid of the insight which comes from instinctive sympathy." In modern life tragedy is caused because everyone thinks of himself and nobody has any sympathy for the rest. In *Justice* Falder's life is ruined because everyone follows the law and no one shows any sympathy to Falder. In *Strife* all the suffering and waste could have been avoided if Anthony had some sympathy for the starving workers. In his plays dealing with class war he shows that the remedy for these clashes is human understanding and sympathy.

### Impartiality

Galsworthy's sympathy is not confined to any one class. He is impartial. While he was studying at the university of Oxford he acquired the habit of keeping an open mind which sees both sides of a question. His training as a barrister made him objective and



detached. He started judging every issue with judicial impartiality. We can almost see the balance swinging in his mind this way and that. He was sincere and sympathetic to all and so he could be impartial in conflicts between different parties. As he said, "There are two sides to every coin." In strife he states the case for capital as well as labour with equal eloquence. He sympathises with the labourers who were starving and shivering in the cold. But he does not clothe the poor people in a halo of false idealism.

He also states the faults of the poor. Roberts is not a glorious character. He does not care for his wife's sufferings. He is most unreasonable in his demands. The strike is continued because of the obstinacy of Anthony on the side of the employers and Roberts on the side of the workers. Jones in *The Silver Box* is not a fine character. We sympathise with him because injustice is done to him and to his wife and children because of their poverty. But we must remember that he is a drunkard who beats his wife and treats her very badly.

According to A. C. Baugh, his "lucid and all too facile compassion was expended rather upon social groups than upon individuals, and his hostility, like Shaw's, was to institutions rather than to men and women."

In *The Skin Game* he honestly and impartially states the point of view of the landlord as well as that of the manufacturer.

The advantage of impartiality in a play is that suspense is maintained throughout since the scales are held evenly. The interest of the reader does not flag. The disadvantage of the dramatist's impartiality is that he presents both sides of the case and gives no solution. The conflict is left unresolved.

Galsworthy himself summarises his principle of impartiality thus, "Let me try to eliminate any bias, and see the whole thing as should an umpire—one of those pure beings in white coats, purged of all the prejudices, passions and predilections of mankind. Let me have no temperament for the time being. Only from an impersonal point of view, if there be such a thing, am I going to get even approximately at the truth."

He is like a presiding judge perpetually engaged in a dispassionate summing up.

"Galsworthy is by nature cold, impartial, judicial. He can present on the stage the clash of character and character, the struggle of the poor and the rich, and he never depresses the beam of justice with his own finger." (William Harold).

There is, however, no conflict between his sympathy for the poor and his impartiality.

"Galsworthy may be impartial between one character and another but he is not impartial when faced by human shortsighted-



ness and folly which make these characters what they are. The plays are really a tremendous indictment of the whole fabric of modern civilization and at the same time a passionate appeal for understanding sympathy with the innocent victims of a social system for which all of us are responsible."

Galsworthy presented in his plays the panorama of English life with perfect sincerity, fairness and impartiality. Thus his qualities of character are all reflected in his plays.



## VII

### GALSWORTHY'S MAJOR PLAYS

#### 1. The Silver Box (1906)

*The Silver Box* is based on the idea that in modern society there is one law for the rich and another for the poor.

Jack is the son of John Barthwick, a wealthy Member of Parliament. One night he comes home dead drunk. In sheer fun he has stolen the purse of the woman with whom he passed the evening. He is so drunk that he cannot find the keyhole of the door of his own house. He, therefore, takes help from Jones, an unemployed loafer who is also drunk but not so much as Jack. Jones helps him to find the keyhole and takes him inside the house. He takes advantage of the situation and steals the purse and a silver cigarette box which is lying on the table and quietly goes out of the house.

Mrs. Jones is a charwoman in that house. She is suspected of having stolen the silver box. The box is discovered in her house by Robert Snow, the police inspector. Mrs. Jones is arrested by Snow. Jones confesses his guilt and assaults Snow for laying hands wrongfully on his wife. He is brought for trial before a police magistrate.

The crimes of Jack and Jones are almost exactly alike. Both are drunk when they commit the crimes. Both say that they had no intention to steal but took the objects out of spite or sudden resentment.

Jack's father engages a clever solicitor who tells him what to say in court. Jones on the other hand, gives a true account of what had happened.

The Magistrate tells Jones and his wife that "drunkenness is no excuse." But he only smiles when Jack tells him that he had a lot of champagne in supper. The constable silences Jones but does nothing to silence Jack. The result is that Jack goes scot-free while poor Jones is convicted to one month's hard labour for theft and assault. Mrs. Jones loses her job and her children starve.



Thus a rich man who is really guilty escapes while a poor man is condemned for the same crime and his family is completely ruined. The play shows the disparity between the *haves* and the *have-nots* and the injustice of the law to the latter.

The play makes this point very forcefully without introducing a hero and a villain. The rich father is not a cruel man and the son is not a mean fellow. The judge is not corrupt and vindictive. The rich man means well. The son is not malevolent but only easy-going. The poor man is not deserving and noble. He is a lazy, drunken brute who beats his wife. The judge is scrupulously fair. He only acts on the evidence before him. Yet a horrible injustice is committed. The real criminal is society and its perverse laws and conventions.

The playwright remains absolutely impartial. He maintains his reserve and does not go to extremes. He is neither paradoxical nor sentimental. This Play is weighty in thought and brilliant in execution.

## 2. Strife (1909)

This play deals with the conflict between capital and labour. The story is of a strike in the Trenartha Tin Plate Works situated on the borders of England and Wales. The action of the play takes place on the 7th of February. A strike has been going on in the factory for the previous five months. It is extremely cold. The families of the workers are suffering a lot because of hunger and cold. The Company has suffered a loss of £ 50,000. The workers are without coal and without food. The two sides had arrived at a compromise but the strike continues due to the adamant attitude of two men—John Anthony, Chairman of the Company and Roberts, the leader of the workers.

The play begins with a meeting of the Board of Directors. The Chairman believes in the policy of "No Surrender". The other Directors feel that they should have a compromise. Harness, a Trade Union official, meets them. He tells them that the Union is not supporting the striking workers of this company because some of their demands are excessive. If they withdraw these demands the Union will support them. He tells the Board that the workers do not want pity; they want justice.

The workers have been on strike without the support of the Union because of Roberts. Mr. Anthony's daughter, Enid, appeals to her father to relent. Her maid, Annie, had married Roberts. She is in a miserable condition. She wants to help Annie but Roberts refuses to take any help from her. The families of the workers are penniless and in great distress. Enid appeals to Roberts also to relent but Roberts remains adamant. Neither the directors nor the workers show the spirit of "give and take". The workers are in a mood to compromise but Roberts appeals to them not to surrender.



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Annie Roberts dies of cold and hunger. The workers now want to make terms with the employers. Edgar has sympathy with the suffering families of the workers. Anthony remains stubborn. He is voted down in the Board and he resigns his position.

Roberts is disowned by the workers and Harness brings about a compromise. The strike is at an end. Harness sums up the situation thus: "A woman dead; and the two best men both broken." Trench tells us that the terms of the final settlement are the same as had been drawn up by him and Harness before the fight began. The losses of the company and the sufferings of the workers have been in vain.

### 3. The Eldest Son (1909)

This play deals with class consciousness. The eldest son of an English baronet falls in love with and wants to marry the serving maid. But this union is opposed by the family on the ground that he must not marry a girl who is much below him in status, position and wealth. The result is a social tragedy. Human feelings have to be sacrificed at the altar of family prestige and traditions.

### 4. Justice (1910)

In this play he tried to show that there is no *Justice* in our legal system. Law is a blind, malignant force which crushes down an innocent person under its iron heels. It shows no consideration for the basic weaknesses of human beings. It is a heartless, mechanical process and pays no heed to human feelings. This idea is brought home to us through the conviction and death of an innocent young man of twenty-three who has committed a crime on an impulse which almost amounted to temporary insanity.

Falder is a young clerk in the firm of James and Walter How. Falder is an honest and sincere man. But he falls in love with an unfortunate married woman, Ruth Honeywill. Her husband is a cruel and heartless monster. Early one morning she comes to him. Her husband has tried to strangle her to death. He wants to marry her but he cannot because she has not been divorced by her husband. He wants to take her to a foreign country and marry her. But he has no money. He is almost mad with grief and anger.

In this mood he goes to the office. A cheque for nine pounds is handed over to him for encashment. He has a momentary fit of madness in which the idea comes to him that if he adds "ty" after "nine" and one zero after nine, he will have enough money to take Ruth to a foreign country. He could write to the firm from there and pay the money back to them. In a fit of madness lasting just four minutes he alters the cheque and takes the cash. He realizes his guilt but it is too late for him to do anything.

A few hours before his departure his crime is detected. He explains the circumstances to James and promises to return the money. C. C. Bagar James does not believe him and he is handed over



to the police. The law takes its own course. He is tried. His advocate, Frome, pleads that he had done the crime in a maddening fit of excitement and has already suffered much due to mental torture. But law does not care for feelings. He is sentenced to three years' rigorous imprisonment. Falder is miserable in prison where he is first kept in solitary confinement. He has a nervous breakdown. After three years of extreme mental agony he is at last released.

Now he comes out but he cannot get a job. He is hated everywhere. He has been caught in a trap. He goes to his old firm and requests his former employers to give him a job. James agrees to give him another chance on some conditions. But while he is talking to James, Wister, a police sergeant, arrives there. The law requires that a convict after he is released must report to police regularly. This Falder had not done. So he was to be arrested again. Wister tries to catch hold of Falder and drag him. Falder tries to break away, falls down, breaks his neck and dies. Thus an innocent person's life is wrecked because of what he did in a moment under great emotional stress.

In this play there is no villain who can be held responsible for the tragedy. The real villain is the Law which is blind and considers only the action and does not bother about the feelings that motivated the action.

### 5. The Pigeon (1911)

This play deals with the problem of reclaiming the social outcasts. There are of course, very sincere social reformers and thinkers. But these idealists are not able to produce the right results. They only produce abstract theories and paper schemes. Institutes have been made to provide charity to the social outcasts and the very poor. But in these institutions the unfortunate people are not treated with sympathy and sweetness. The houses of correction lack human touch and so they cannot reclaim the bruised and starved souls of the outcasts. The inmates of reformatories and charitable institutions are often subjected to very humiliating treatment which makes them worse. What is required is sympathetic understanding and generous relief.

This is one of his greatest plays. "It has superb construction, continuous movement and economy of gesture so characteristic of its author's genius; in addition, it is filled with the atmosphere of poetry, mystery and indignation. It is an irresistible wistful charm."

### 6. The Mob (1913)

This play is a study of the mentality of a mob. A mob has no brain; it is carried away by sentiment. It is not moved by an idealist's appeal to reason.

Stephen More is an idealist and is opposed to war. The mob, however, is roused up in favour of war. More fights against this



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desire of the mob and perishes in the struggle. This is how idealists and visionaries are sacrificed at the altar of mob mentality and then monuments are raised in their honour.

Galsworthy's dislike of mob mentality is expressed thus in the play: "You—mob, are the most contemptible thing under the sun. You are the thing that pelts the weak; kicks women, hurls down free speech. This is today, that tomorrow. Brain you have none. Spirit—not the least of it".

*The Mob* despises the fight of an idealist against adverse social forces. Galsworthy feels that it is "the duty of a man to stick to his guns in the face of popular disapproval, so long as his convictions tell him he is right".

The play is interesting because it was composed in 1913 and staged just before the First World War engulfed the world in a terrible catastrophe. The disaster could have been avoided if the idealists had been listened to.

### 7. *The Skin Game* (1919)

This play depicts the clash between two classes and interests. It shows the clash between the old class of nobles and aristocrats and the new rich class of the owners of industry.

The play shows the clash between two strong individuals—Hillchrist who represents the landed aristocracy of England and Hornblower who represents the manufacturing class. Hillchrist is a kind old man, whereas Hornblower is an aggressive man who wants to become richer and richer. He comes from the north to the countryside and wants to develop this locality. The quarrel starts when both of them want to purchase the same piece of land.

Centry is a beautiful estate which provides a fine view to the Hillchrist family. Hornblower has money and he wants social recognition which the aristocrats do not give him. He purchases this estate and wants to set up a factory there. Mrs. Hillchrist starts spreading scandals about Hornblower's daughter-in-law, Chloe, who has a questionable past. Chloe attempts to commit suicide. No one has any grievance against her but she suffers because of the clash between the two forces. Both the families are ruined. The motto of the play is "Who touches pitch shall be defiled". A question which is on the lips of Hillchrist and his daughter Jill, is "What's gentility worth if it can't stand fire?" Galsworthy states the case for both sides impartially and shows how ruinous quarrels between individuals and classes can be.

### 8. *Loyalties* (1921)

This play shows the clashing loyalties of various characters—loyalty to one's race, to one's friends, to one's family and to one's profession.



Captain Dancy was a brilliant and dashing officer of the British Army during the First World War. He was awarded the D. S. O. He retired from the army when peace came because now the army was not exciting enough. He loved adventure and wanted to do desperate things. He had an affair with the daughter of an Italian jew, Mr. Ricardos. Then he married Mabel. Ricardos told him that if he wanted his affair with Ricardo's daughter to be kept a secret he must pay him £ 1,000. He had a fine mare named Rosemary which he gave to a young jew named De Levis. De Levis sold that mare to a bookie for £ 1,000.

Charles and Lady Winsor have invited a number of their friends to their country-house. Among these are Dancy and Mabel, De Levis and General Canynge. The Christians have a prejudice against De Levis because he is a jew. Dancy and De Levis are living in adjacent rooms and each room has a separate balcony. Dancy has a grudge against De Levis because the latter had got £ 1,000 for his mare.

As they were coming from the Dining Room, Dancy saw that De Levis had gone to the bath room. He jumped from the balcony of his own room to the balcony of the room of De Levis, took the money and jumped back to the balcony of his own room. He did this because he needed money urgently to pay Mr. Ricardos and he felt that it was really his money because it had been obtained by selling his mare. But he did not tell his wife, Mabel, anything about the theft or about his affair with Ricardos' daughter. She was absolutely loyal to him.

De Levis raises a hue and cry about the loss of his money and insists on calling the police. He suspects Dancy but does not tell anyone about his suspicion. General Canynge also suspects Dancy because he had noticed that it was raining out side at the time of the theft and Dancy's coat was wet. But he keeps quite because of his loyalty to a brother army officer.

De Levis wanted to be made a member of the Jockey Club but he is rejected because he is a jew. This annoys him. He is proud of being a jew. He says, "My race was old, when you were all savages." He now tells everyone that he suspects Dancy.

Dancy suggests, to his wife that they should leave England and settle in Nairobi. But she wants him to file a suit against De Levis for defamation. He engages a solicitor, Mr. Twisden, and files a suit against De Levis. The counsel, Sir Frederik, conducts the case very well and it seems that Dancy would win the case. But the bookie had a record of the numbers of the Bank notes he had given to De Levis (which had been lost). These appear in the papers. Mr. Gilman, a grocer, finds that he has one of these notes. He had been given this note by Ricardos. Ricardos tells him that he had got these notes from Dancy. They go to Twisden and tell



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him about it. It is now clear that Dancy is the thief. Twisden now decides to abandon the case because of his loyalty to his profession. Dancy loses the case.

De Levis now comes and tells Dancy that he does not want the money and he is not responsible for the warrant which has been issued for Dancy's arrest.

Dancy now tells Mabel all about his affair with Ricardos, daughter and his theft. She remains loyal to him in spite of all that he has done. If he wants to leave the country she would go with him. If he is imprisoned she would wait for him.

A police Inspector comes to arrest Dancy. Dancy goes into the bed-room. Mabel requests the police inspector to delay the arrest but he does not agree. He has his loyalty to his department. He must perform his duty. Dancy opens the door and shoots himself in the heart and falls dead. Mabel faints. Colford remains loyal to his friend and calls his suicide 'hara-kiri' or honourable death. The play ends as a tragedy.

Thus in this play Galsworthy has presented various types of loyalties—racial, domestic, matrimonial, parental, professional etc. Mabel rightly says, "Loyalty comes before everything."

### 9. The Forest (1922)

This play gives a picture of the modern financiers whose unscrupulous and speculative dealings cause havoc in the economy. People who have invested money in good faith are robbed and ruined by these speculators.

The dramatist has shown that our industrial system is like a forest in which the capitalists prowl like lions without any restraint upon the unwary and innocent people of our society.



## VIII

### THE SOURCES OF HIS DRAMATIC MATERIAL

Galsworthy was a serious observer of life. He looked at the world around him with honesty, sincerity and impartiality, and quarried his material from it and shaped it into his dramas.

#### English Society

This world for Galsworthy was the English society of his time. In this respect he was very different from the other British dramatists of his time. Shaw, for instance, cast his plays in Italy or Egypt or Bulgaria or France or some imaginary countries. He took his characters from all sorts of places. He resurrected historical characters like O. Agamemnon, Hector, Cleopatra, etc. He took us back to Methu-



selah" in the remote past or "as far as thought could reach" into the distant future. Barrie took us to a magic wood where people are given a second chance in life or to some enchanted island on the coast of Scotland where persons mysteriously disappear.

Galsworthy, on the other hand, confined himself to the England of his day. He had travelled all over the world but he did not cast his plays in any other country. The scenes of all his plays are set in England. The characters are all English men and women and the problems that he presents, are such as faced the English people of those days. He draws his material from the contemporary English life in all its aspects.

### **The Individual against Social Forces**

Galsworthy's heart was touched at the sight of his fellow beings suffering all round him due to various reasons. He found that they were not suffering due to the villainy of some individuals. The culprit responsible for their sufferings was that inhuman and invisible force called society.

Society is an organization of individuals but it acts with less understanding and less intelligence than the individuals composing it. Society has made laws for its protection. It punishes those who break these laws without considering the circumstances in which the individuals acted in that way.

A thief is made, not born. Dire necessities often force a person to steal. Once he is caught he is subjected to such inhuman treatment that he feels impelled to take revenge for this cruel treatment. He steals again and murders people to escape being caught and becomes a dacoit. Finally he passes a miserable life in prison or is hanged or commits suicide. It is society that drives people to commit crimes and then drives them to their destruction.

The individual is crushed under the mighty wheels of social forces. Society, as at present constituted, is the greatest evil. Galsworthy, therefore, wanted that the individual should be protected against this social monster.

### **No Sympathy**

The main trouble about modern life is that each one thinks only of himself and no one sympathises with a suffering individual. A person who is caught committing a small crime is hunted down till he becomes a confirmed criminal.

Society has no sympathy for those who have deteriorated socially and become wrecks only because of the conditions in which they were forced to live in society.

There is no sympathy in anyone's heart for a woman who has become a prostitute because of adverse circumstances. Nor is there any sympathy for the drunkards, criminals and other outcasts who have been reduced to this condition only because of the actions of society.



### Class against Class

He saw that people had become organized in different castes, communities and classes. These groups had much greater animosity against other groups than the individuals composing them. People were obsessed with class consciousness and they were constantly coming into conflict with those belonging to other classes.

Galsworthy noticed that society was broken up into hostile camps. Capital was pitched against labour. The old landlords and aristocrats were in conflict with the newly rich class of the owners of industry. The Christians were against the Jews. The idealists were fighting a losing battle against the brainless mob. He found unscrupulous speculators depriving innocent investors of their hard earned money.

He saw that the ties that bind the members of a family together were strained to the breaking point. The youth were revolting against parental authority. Women were struggling to escape from unhappy marriages.

### Bourgeois mentality

Galsworthy was disgusted at the bourgeois mentality of the upper middle classes of England. These people were dominated by materialism, possessiveness, conventionalism, philistinism, unimaginativeness, indifference to the higher values of life, self-complacency and an adherence to the codified mode of living. Galsworthy waged an incessant war against this attitude towards life.

### Justice

Galsworthy found that the legal system was so full of flaws that true justice could not be expected from the law courts. There was one law for the rich and another for the poor. A person having a long purse could easily twist the law in his favour. This moved Galsworthy to tremendous indignation.

### Conclusion

Galsworthy took all these materials and shaped them into his plays with absolute objectivity and impartiality.



## IX

### THE THEMES OF HIS PLAYS

The duty of a true artist is to depict life as truthfully as he can. The earlier dramatists based their plays on the eternal human impulses like love, jealousy, ambition, hatred, bitterness, friendship, cruelty, the feeling of revolt against the tyranny of the gods or kings or parents, madness etc. These do not occupy the mind of Galsworthy. He is only concerned with social problems.



"The world outside", says he, "is full of urgent problems, clamouring for dramatic expression." He took the themes for his plays from the life that he saw around him. He saw that the society with its unjust laws and powerful institutions, its distinction of wealth and power, crushed down a large number of poor and helpless individuals. Galsworthy looked at this scene as impartially as he could but his sympathy was always with the poor, the oppressed, the down-trodden, the under-dog. In all these plays the dramatist is the judge and society the criminal.

In all, Galsworthy wrote about thirty plays. His main plays can be divided into five groups according to their themes.

### Group 1—Exposing Social Injustice

These plays deal with social injustice in one form or another. "The community as a whole is often much harsher and more cruel than the individuals who compose it. Such a community, in devising institutions and setting up machinery for its own protection and the punishment of offenders, may inflict incalculable misery and even injustice upon innocent persons, although the officials administering such institutions may themselves be the humanest and most kind-hearted of men. Such instances of conflict between communal rights and individual claims naturally provide admirable material for drama".

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|-----------------------|---|
| <i>The Silver Box</i> | It illustrates the old adage that there is one law for the rich and another for the poor. A long purse can sway justice in its favour. There is great disparity between the 'haves' and the 'have-nots'. The poor are helpless before the law.  |
| <i>The Show</i>       | He criticises journalists who delight in spreading scandals about the private lives of important people.  |
| <i>Justice</i>        | He shows that man-made laws do not provide real justice. Those who have to implement these laws have no human touch. They do not consider motives. They do not differentiate between a hardened criminal and a weak individual. A weak person who commits a crime under terrible stress is completely ruined. In this play he also shows the cruelty of solitary confinement. |
| <i>Escape</i>         | This play shows the cruelty of society towards a persons who comes out of prison after completing his term. A person who escapes from prison is received by society with open arms while a person who comes out of prison after completing his term is subjected to endless troubles.   |



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*The Forest* In this play he exposes the financiers who ruin ordinary people by their unscrupulous speculation.

**Group 2—Family Relations**

“The loyalties or antagonisms of husband and wife, the struggle to escape from an unhappy marriage, the revolt of youth against parental authority, these provide Galsworthy with admirable subjects for dramatic treatment”.

*Joy* This play shows the stresses and strains on a young girl as she grows into a lover and woman.

*The Fugitive* This play deals with the problem of unhappy marriages. Clare hates her husband. If she gives her love to another man, she has to lose her home and face the humiliation of divorce proceedings. Driven by circumstances she concludes that a dose of poison is her only refuge.

*A Family Man* Disaster is caused when excessive authority takes the place of love and affection in a family. The young people revolt against parental authority.

**Group 3—The Problem of the Outcasts**

These plays deal with the problem of those whose lives have been wrecked by the bad treatment of society. A person becomes a drunkard because he wants to forget the blows inflicted on him by his fellow men. Horrible conditions force a woman to become a prostitute. Circumstances force a person to steal for the first time. The circumstances and motives are not considered and he is sent to prison. There he is treated like an animal. When he comes out of prison nobody gives him any work. So he steals again. This makes him a criminal.

*The Pigeon* This play exposes the evils of shelter homes and poor houses. The reformers are visionaries and not practical men. There is no sympathy for those who are forced to modern charitable institutions.

*Windows* A young woman gets an illegitimate child. She kills him to escape social tyranny. She is sent to prison. When she comes out, no one has any sympathy with her.



**Group 4—The Tragedy of Idealism**

The idealists are visionaries who are far ahead of their age. So they often fail to carry the people with them. Generally the idealists are crucified by the people and then honoured with monuments.

*The Mob*

The play shows the conflict between an idealist who wants peace and a mob that wants war.

*A Bit of Love*

An idealist has to face oppression and persecution.

**Group 5—Caste Feeling**

People generally have the feeling that they belong to a higher class than others. Mankind is divided into different racial, social, political, religious and economic communities and interests. Each one has a feeling that he belongs to a higher class than others. Clashes between communities, classes and interests are inevitable. These conflicts provide Galsworthy with material for several of his tragedies.

“In these plays the interest is focussed, not on an individual, but on a class, or the ideals of a class, loyalty to which implies antagonism to some other class.”

*The Eldest Son*

It is below the dignity of a baronet's son to marry a maid-servant.

*The Skin Game*

This play depicts the conflict between the land-owning aristocrats and the newly rich class of the owners of industry.

*Strife*

It dramatises the conflict between capital and labour.

*Loyalties*

It shows the various loyalties of people and how they clash with one another. It also shows the conflict between the Christians and the Jews.

*The Weavers*

The theme of this play also is the conflict between capital and labour.

*Foundations*

It analyses the problem of class divisions.

Thus Galsworthy's tragedies cover most of the conflicts that he saw in the life around him. These conflicts arise chiefly because of a lack of imagination and human understanding among the people. Most of these tragedies can be avoided by the exercise of kindness, charity, consideration and sympathetic understanding of each other's difficulties and points of view.





## X THE TYPES OF TRAGEDY

### What is tragedy ?

A tragedy is a play of a serious or sorrowful character with a fatal or disastrous conclusion. Every tragic action consists of a great crisis in some life presented in action through language in such a way as to stir the hearts of those who see and hear it.

In a general sense every death is a tragedy for the relations of the deceased. But that is not a tragedy in the literary sense. A tragedy in this sense is a story presented in action in which there is conflict and the death or disaster follows inevitably from this conflict. Thus a person's death as a result of an accident is not a tragedy even if the deceased was a great man and his death has caused a great loss to the nation.

Conflict is essential in a tragedy. The conflict may be between an individual and his fate and the gods; or it may be the conflict between a hero and a villain in which the tragedy occurs due to some weakness in the hero's character, or it may be a conflict between a weak individual and a strong social force. The tragedy inevitably results from this conflict.

A good tragedy does not make us sad. It creates awe and terror. We identify ourselves with the hero and we are deeply touched by the wreckage of his life with its awful waste and destruction.

When we see the hero being crushed down by the gods or by fate or by some weakness in his character or by the might of powerful forces, we do not feel sad or pessimistic about life. Our hearts are stirred to their depth with a sense of awe and terror. This is the appeal of all great tragedy.

### The Classical Tragedy

This tragedy originated in ancient Greece. The performance of tragedies was an essential part of Greek festivals and religious activities. The main Greek tragedians were Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides.

In this type of tragedy the conflict is between the hero and Fate or the gods. The hero is a man of eminent rank and dignity. He may be a king or a prince or a great personality. He comes into conflict with the gods because he has committed some sin. He fights heroically but is ultimately annihilated.

The hero is punished by the gods because he has broken some divine law or committed some sin. This might have been done deliberately or through chance or ignorance. He may not even be aware of his sin. It might have been committed by his forefathers. Yet he was punished for it. Unconscious action and thoughtless folly are enough to bring punishment to an individual. The person who



became proud of his successes and forgot the part of the gods in his triumph was punished by the goddess Nemesis. He was also punished if he pleased some gods and neglected others.

Thus in a tragedy of Sophocles Oedipus invites the wrath of the gods because he unconsciously breaks the divine law which forbids patricide and incest. Oedipus slays his own father in ignorance and marries his own mother, Jocasta and has two sons and two daughters by her. When he discovers his parentage he is so horrified that he puts out his own eyes and Jocasta hangs herself.

Fate plays the principal part in this tragedy. Man struggles in vain against his destiny and is powerless against supernatural forces.

The effect of these tragedies on the spectators was that they were purged of their baser feelings and were filled with admiration for the brave struggles of the heroes and with awe at the power of the mighty gods.

### The Romantic Tragedy

The next important type of tragedy was the one written by Shakespeare and some of his contemporaries and successors. Here character takes the place of Destiny. Supernatural machinery and Fate are discarded. The action takes place on the human plane and tragedy is caused by some blemish in the character of the hero.

The hero in Romantic tragedy is an outstanding personality. He may be a king or a great General or a prominent individual whose downfall affects thousands of persons around him. He has all the noble qualities but has only one weakness. This is called his fatal flaw. The men and women are sharply contrasted in black and white representing evil and good. The actions of the villain lead to the death of the hero and at the same time it leads to his spiritual sublimation. The entire action leads to the inevitable catastrophe.

Macbeth, for instance, is a very brave general and a very noble person. He has, however, one weakness : excessive ambition. Due to this one weakness he kills Duncan when he is a guest in his own castle. This starts a cycle of crimes which make him the enemy of all Scotland and finally ends in his death. Hamlet is a perfect prince and an educated gentleman, but he has one weakness : he thinks too much and cannot act. Because of this one weakness there is universal disaster in the kingdom. If Hamlet could act swiftly there would have been all happiness in his life. If Macbeth had thought well before acting as Hamlet used to do, he would have proved to be an ideal king of Scotland. It is the particular weakness of each hero which causes the tragedy.

We are deeply moved by this tragedy because the blemish or weakness of character which brings about his end is shared by all of us. There is dignity in the fall of the hero. He is crushed but



unbowed. This creates in us the feeling of admiration, awe and terror.

### Social Tragedy

When we come to modern times we find a type of tragedy in which there is no dignified hero. There is only a weak, erring individual who struggles against the forces of society and is finally crushed down by them.

There is no villain and yet there is tremendous suffering and a sense of human wastage which move our hearts. This is the type of tragedy written by Galsworthy.

In *Justice* the pitiful, weak-willed clerk who forges a cheque is the principal character. Falder cannot be called a hero. He is not an exalted personage destroyed by Fate or by a villain. This is the tragedy of a weak young man who is caught in the toils of a social system. The individuality of the hero is not emphasized. Anyone of us in similar circumstances would have behaved in the same way.

In *Strife* there is conflict between capital and labour and it causes tremendous suffering to the poor labourers.

In this tragedy the conflict is transferred from the individual to the community. Groups, classes and interests pull in different directions and clash with one another. The conflicts are caused by lack of human understanding. No one is to blame and yet poor, innocent people suffer immensely. Galsworthy calls them sociological tragedies.

There is one element in these tragedies which we do not find in earlier tragedies. That is the element of hope. In Greek tragedy there was no hope. What could man do when pitted against a malignant Fate or against the angry god? The situation of the victim was hopeless. But when we see man being crushed down by the force of a defective legal system, there is hope. The system can be reformed. When capital is in conflict with labour or the Jews are in conflict with the Christians there is hope. A little sympathetic understanding can remedy the situation. The evil of solitary confinement in prison can be ended by the Government. There are social corrections to all the problems and they are within everybody's reach.



## XI

### GALSWORTHY'S SOCIAL TRAGEDY

Coats has given a fine analysis of Galsworthy's Social Tragedy. The main characteristics of this type of tragedy are given ahead :



(a) **No Fate**—In Galsworthy's tragedies there is no question of "external fate". The supernatural element is entirely omitted or reduced to the minimum. The struggle is confined to human beings.

(b) **No hero**—The hero has no importance in this tragedy. The communal groups whose struggles are to be studied are of greater importance than the individuals. Our attention is focussed on the group and not so much on any person representing the group. There is no outstanding personality in a commanding position in whom the interest of the action may centre. The conflict is between groups and the characters acquire a representative capacity rather than an individuality.

(c) **No villain**—If the hero is dismissed from social tragedy, so also is the villain. The sufferings and miseries of modern social life are usually brought about, not by designedly wicked people but by persons animated by the best intentions. People are generally shortsighted, egoistical and unimaginative. These qualities in them spell disaster in society whether they mean it or not. The villain came into conflict with the hero in earlier drama, but in Galsworthy it is the feebleness of man and man-made social forces which are the cause of tragedy. Thus the villain's function in the conflict is performed by social forces which crush down weak individuals.

(d) **Superb characterization**—But if the hero and the villain are eliminated it does not mean that character studies are given up or the art of characterization has lost its beauty or significance. Galsworthy's characters are ordinary men and women whom we meet in everyday life. Galsworthy delineates these characters with great penetration and insight. He has created a gallery of living beings.

(e) **Victims**—Social tragedy in the hands of Galsworthy deals with victims of injustice. The individual finds himself helpless in the face of strong social forces. It seems as if his hands are tied behind his back. In this Galsworthy catches something of the power of Greek tragedy in the sense of tremendous forces at play against the individual. In the Greek type of tragedy these forces were supernatural, in Galsworthy they are man-made social forces which bear down the leading person who is not made of heroic proportions. The power of the law or the mob, or capitalist society, so overwhelms the individual, whether innocent or guilty, that he is completely annihilated.

(f) **Unequal struggle**—In Greek tragedy and also in Shakespearean tragedy the hero was an outstanding personality who fought bravely against heavy odds till the end. In Galsworthy the leading figure is too weak to fight against powerful social forces. A poor drunkard like Jones is no match against the powerful force of the almighty Dollar. He is easily crushed down.

(g) **Situation more important**—In social tragedy the situation is more important than character. Shakespeare's tragedies are primarily



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tragedies of character and the situations are subordinate to character. But in Galsworthy situations are more important than character. It is the situations created by social forces which play a determining part in these tragedies.

(h) **Waste**—Social tragedy emphasizes the wastage caused in modern conflicts. In *The Silver Box* the innocent Mrs. Jones loses her job and her children are on the verge of starvation because of the defect of the legal system. In *Justice* the judicial system causes the ruin of Falder and brings about his suicide. In *Strife* the labourers suffer the privations of cold and hunger and Mrs. Roberts dies just because there is no understanding between capital and labour. The clash of powerful forces causes the waste of innocent lives.

(i) **Pathetic, not tragic**—In classical and romantic tragedy the hero so wrestles with Fate or villainy that he rises superior to disaster even when overwhelmed by it and this awakens in us feelings of admiration and reverential awe. Galsworthy's social tragedy, on the other hand, moves us only to sentiments of compassion. The effect is pathetic and not tragic; the figures are feeble and pitiable and not heroic.

Galsworthy, however, did not agree. He said, "I resent the contention that my 'puppets' are always beaten in their struggle with society. Falder is beaten; Clare is beaten; but in most of the plays they are spiritually emergent, if not materially triumphant."

(j) **Violent death not necessary**—In Shakespearean tragedy the hero always dies a violent death at the end. This is not necessary in Social Tragedy. A single look or gesture or a few words coming from the depth of the heart are enough to create the tragic atmosphere. In *The Silver Box* the perpetrator of the wrong and the victim of injustice face each other at the end and Mrs. Jones only says, "Oh! Sir!" Barthwick makes a shamefaced gesture of refusal and hurries out of the court. All the horror of the injustice done to her and her helplessness are compressed in the words, "Oh! Sir!" A similar tragic atmosphere is built up at the end of *Strife* by the look that Anthony and Roberts give to each other.

(k) **Hope**—In social tragedy the struggle is confined to human beings. This relieves the dreadfulness and gloom to some extent. When man was struggling against the angry gods there was no hope for him. But tragedy resulting from the destruction of the individual by social forces is remediable. The conflict involving man for his greed, stupidity and selfishness may result in waste and the victim may suffer, but there is a feeling of hope that better experience, reasonableness and patience may change the attitude of man and make the world a better place to live in.

### Galsworthy's tragic appeal

Prof. Nicoll does not agree that the tragedies of Galsworthy are only pathetic and not tragic. According to him they have the



true tragic atmosphere. He says, "judged by the standards of Grecian and Elizabethan art his plays are not high tragedies. There is in them no single hero who stands forward as a dominant figure, rising to a loftier height than his fellow-men. But we cannot judge the art of present day by the standards of the past. That was the error of the pseudo-classical critics of the Augustan period. If we come to essentials we find that Mr. Galsworthy's plays do not fall, as Sir Arthur Pinero's fall, into pathos. The author possesses despite his kindliness of heart a genuine tragic firmness. We do not feel pity for the fate of Falder so much as we feel awe in contemplating the mighty millstones of justice, ruthless and fateful in their silent power. The tragic atmosphere dominates the play ; tears are useless and vain. The heroes of Galsworthy's dramas are the unseen fates of modern existence, against which we poor mortals can but pitifully cry out in moments of desperation and horror."



## XII

### THE PROBLEM PLAY AND GALSWORTHY

The great dramatists of past ages from Sophocles and Euripides to Shakespeare and Sheridan, were concerned with the fundamental feelings of the human heart like love, hate, jealousy, bitterness, ambition, fear of the gods, love of glory, madness etc. The modern dramatist who looks at the life around him and wants to present it in his plays finds that man today is confronted with numerous problems and so he must tackle these problems if he is to present modern life truthfully. His plays, therefore, get involved in the presentation of social, political, moral, personal and domestic problems. These plays which deal realistically with the manifold problems of the modern man were given the name 'Problem Play' by Sydney Grundy.

#### Ibsen and Shaw

The pioneer of this new drama was a Norwegian dramatist, Henrik Ibsen by name. He started discussing in his plays the various problems of society, home, sex, hereditary diseases etc. His frank and realistic discussion of these problems created a sensation in the literary circles in Europe. In England his *Doll's House* was staged as translated by William Archer. It was bitterly condemned by most of the dramatic critics. But it was praised by George Bernard Shaw. He started writing plays to show that the discussion of a problem, if done with wit and humour, did not make a play dull. He wrote very interesting comedies dealing wittily with the problems of love, marriage, sex, prostitution, war, language, democracy, the persecution of the Christians, the Salvation Army, the medical profession, evolution etc. This created a powerful trend and other dramatists like St. John Hankin, Stanley Houghton, Granville-Barker and



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several others wrote problem plays. Many dramatists followed Ibsen on the continent. In Russia Duggas Marki and his followers wrote plays dealing with the problems of Russian society.

**Galsworthy**

Galsworthy was a reformer by temperament. He had a warm heart and he had a great sympathy with individuals who come into conflict with society and its inhuman and pitiless laws and institutions and are crushed down in the process. At first Galsworthy expressed his ideas through the medium of novels. Then he felt that he could express his ideas better through the medium of drama. So he started writing social tragedies. All his tragedies deal with various social, domestic, moral and legal problems.

**His Problem Plays**

All the plays of Galsworthy are problem plays. *Justice* shows that the machinery devised by society to provide justice does not give justice to a weak individual who commits a crime in a moment of great emotional stress. Once the wheels of this giant machine are set in motion they move on till they have completely crushed the individual. This play also shows the cruelty of solitary confinement. *The Silver Box* illustrates the old adage that there is one law for the rich and another for the poor. There is no equality before the law. *Strife* shows the conflict between capital and labour. *Loyalties* shows the conflicting loyalties between different groups and individuals. *The Skin Game* presents the problem of the conflict between the landed aristocracy and the new rich class of manufacturers.

**Characteristics of Problem Plays**

1. The problem Plays discuss the problem very realistically. Not only the language and style but the whole setting, the situations and characters are realistic.
2. The Problem Play is essentially a drama of ideas. Shaw says that a problem play is "a factory of thought". Galsworthy says, "The perfect dramatist rounds up his characters and facts within the ring-fence of a dominant idea". The dramatists regard these plays as a vehicle for the dissemination of ideas. They use it as a medium for propaganda and social reform. The plays of Galsworthy and Shaw changed the public opinion in the country and many reforms in jail administration and judicial systems were introduced by the Government.
3. These plays represent real life and so they are written in prose.
4. There is no action on the stage in these plays. Discussion is very important. The characters just sit down and discuss the problem.
5. There is nothing heroic in these plays. There are common place tropes and common themes.



6. The dramatists discuss the problem from all aspects but do not offer any solution. The plays end on a question mark.
7. In many of these plays the characters are only mouthpieces of the playwright. They stand for ideas. They do not have a personality of their own.
8. The dialogue is used for the discussion of the problem.
9. In these plays generally elaborate Stage Directions are given. These help the Stage Manager, the actor and the reader to understand the point of view of the dramatist.
10. There are no soliloquies or 'Asides'.
11. Generally these plays observe the unities of time, place and action.

### Defects of Problem Plays

1. These plays are obsessed with the sordid, grim realities of everyday life and ignore the romantic and imaginative side of life.
2. They deal with ephemeral problems and ignore the fundamental feelings of the human heart.
3. Many of them become propaganda plays. They only project the writer's beliefs and attitudes.
4. In many of these plays characterization is very feeble. The characters only stand for different ideas.
5. The dialogues generally consist of long speeches which become very boring.
6. There is no action to sustain the interest of the play.
7. These plays will be of interest only so long as the problem is agitating the mind of the public. They will cease to interest the people after the problem has ceased to interest them.
8. Some of the critics say that drama is meant only to entertain the people. Discussion of problems is outside its jurisdiction. This is the function of a debating society.

### Conclusion

But many of the problem plays of Shaw and Galsworthy have survived in spite of the fact that the problems have ceased to exist. For instance, Shaw wrote *The Doctor's Dilemma* on the problems of the medical profession as it existed in his days. Now the situation has changed completely. England is a welfare state. The state cares not only to cure diseases but also to prevent them. There is no conflict between the general medical practitioner and the specialist. Each doctor does not have his own theory of treatment. The whole situation is changed. Yet the play is read and staged even now because of the wit and humour of its dialogue and its superb



characterization. The same is true of Galsworthy's plays. They will continue to be read and staged long after the problems which they present have ceased to interest people.



### XIII GALSWORTHY'S DRAMATIC THEORY AND CRAFTSMANSHIP

Galsworthy is a master of dramatic technique. He has a clear ideal of the function of different parts of a play and how they are to be fused together to form a perfect drama. In his plays he has shown the practice of his own theory. Coats says, "Galsworthy is a master of dramatic technique and his plays are well worth studying from this point of view alone."

#### Sincerity and Intensity

The main requirement of drama is that the dramatist should portray some aspect of life objectively and sincerely. In his 'New Spirit in Drama' he says, "The only things vital in drama, as in every art, are achieved when the maker has fixed his soul on the making of a thing that shall seem fine to himself.... Sincerity bars out no themes—it only demands that the dramatist's moods and visions should be intense enough to keep him absorbed, that he should have something to say so engrossing to himself that he has no need to stray here and there and gather purple plums to eke out what was intended for an apple tart." Judged by this criterion the plays of Galsworthy are perfect. He only describes what he feels intensely and expresses it with sincerity. He practises perfect economy and has no need of embellishments.

#### His Dramatic Method

Galsworthy has described his conception of dramatic method and art in *Platitudes Concerning Drama*, a paper included in *The Inn of Tranquillity*. "The dramatist of to-day" he writes, "may pursue one of the three aims. He may give the public those views and codes of life in which it already believes or desires to believe. He may give them the views or codes of life in which he himself believes. There is a third course: To set before the public no cut and dried rules, but the phenomena of life and character, selected and combined, but *not distorted*, by the dramatist's outlook set down without fear, favour or prejudice, leaving the public to draw such poor moral as nature may afford. The third method requires a certain detachment: it requires a sympathy with, a love of, and a curiosity as to things for their own sake; it requires a far view, together with patient industry, for no immediate practical result." Obviously this third method is the one Galsworthy himself prefers—it requires detachment, sympathy, the far view, and it depends mainly on the interpretation of character.



## Themes

Galsworthy deals with social problems in his plays. His themes are the "problems of the age, its conflicts and inequalities, and the iniquities of man-made laws and systems." Each play deals with some social, economic, political or legal problem.

Many persons object that the discussion of problems is outside the jurisdiction of drama. The discussion of problems should be the concern of a debating society. Drama should only provide entertainment. But Galsworthy would reply that modern life is beset with problems and it is the function of drama to hold a mirror to life. A dramatist should present different aspects of these problems as objectively and impartially as possible.

## Moral Purpose

Galsworthy does not agree that drama should provide only entertainment. It should also be a source of enlightenment and edification. He says, "I am not a reformer—only a painter of pictures, a maker of things." He is not a propagandist or a missionary. But all the same his plays have a moral purpose. He says, "A drama must be shaped so as to have a spire of meaning. Every grouping of life and character has its inherent moral; and the business of the dramatist is so to pose the group as to bring that moral poignantly to the light of day." He gives both sides of each case impartially but one cannot help noticing that his sympathy lies with the victim of the present unjust social order—the poor, the down-trodden, the under-dog. He does not present solutions to the problems but he makes us think about them. In every play he gives us a message but he embodies it so artistically in the drama that it becomes an inseparable part of the whole.

His moral indignation is not allowed to get the better of his imagination.

## Plot Construction

Galsworthy had some definite ideas about the construction of plots in plays. "A good plot", he writes, "is that sure edifice which slowly rises out of the interplay of circumstances on temperament, and temperament on circumstance within the enclosing atmosphere of an idea. A human being is the best plot there is." Aristotle made plot more important than character. "With Galsworthy character comes first, plot second. He says, "The dramatist who hangs his characters to his plot instead of hanging his plots to his characters is guilty of cardinal sin."

Each play of Galsworthy is based on a theme which is calculated to give some social message. Every incident contributes to that theme. The plot is based on ideas appropriate to the theme of the play. Thus *Justice* dwells on the evils of the English judicial system and the cruelty of solitary confinement. *Strife* shows the conflict between capital and labour and the consequent suffering of the



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workers. *The Silver Box* illustrates the old adage that there is one law for the rich and another for the poor.

Each plot is built on a single incident or situation and the reaction of a few characters to that situation. The theft of a thousand pounds is the starting point in *Loyalties* and the plot develops as a result of the reaction of different characters to the suspicion that Dancy is the culprit. In *Justice* the single act of Falder of altering a cheque shapes his entire destiny.

The plots begin with the Exposition and lead on to a crisis resulting in a climax and then the inevitable catastrophe. The interest aroused by the Exposition is never allowed to flag. Suspense is kept up throughout. In *Strife* the determined attitude of Anthony and Roberts keeps us in suspense. In *The Silver Box* we do not know whether Jack Barthwick would be punished in the same way as Jones. So the suspense is kept right up to the end.

The plots are simple and straightforward. There are no sub-plots. The plots are realistic and naturalistic. The interest does not depend on the ingenuity of the story. It depends on how beautifully the situation is unfolded and what effect it creates on character.

### Dramatic Action

Galsworthy says, "True dramatic action is what the characters do at once contrary, as it were, to expectation, and yet because they have already done other things. No dramatist lets his audience know what is coming but neither should he suffer his character to act without making his audience feel that those actions are in harmony with temperament, and arise from previous known actions of other characters in the play." In *Loyalties* the proof of Dancy's guilt comes from a strange source but when we think about it we feel that it is not surprising or illogical. We should have expected it because of the known character of Dancy.

### Characterization

Galsworthy regards character as the most important element of his dramatic technique. For him character is the foundation of plot. He says, "Take care of character, action and dialogue will take care of themselves." His characters are living human beings of flesh and blood.

Galsworthy's characters are flat characters. They remain the same from the beginning to the end of the play. They do not change under the influence of events. They are introduced only to perform a certain function in the play. They do not have a life of their own apart from the play.

Galsworthy's characters are types rather than individuals. They stand for certain ideas. Thus Anthony represents capital and Roberts represents labour. Falder is the common clerk who represents the ordinary lower middle class person, romantic in nature and suffering from want of money.



His characters have deep emotions but they keep them subdued. Their expression is marked by a deliberate understatement.

### Dialogues

Galsworthy's dialogues are very skilfully written. They are ordinary conversations but they are interesting and lead to the development of the plot and character. They are witty, terse and crisp. Galsworthy says, "Good dialogue is character marshalled so as to continue to stimulate interest or excitement. The art of writing true dramatic dialogue is an austere art, denying itself all licence, grudging every sentence devoted to the mere machinery of the play suppressing all jokes and epigrams severed from character, relying for fun and pathos on the fun and tears of life. From start to finish good dialogue is handmade, like good lace; clear of fine texture, furthering with each thread, the harmony and strength of a design to which it must be subordinated."

Galsworthy practised this austerity in the writing of his dialogues. His characters do not deliver long speeches or soliloquies. Galsworthy creates the illusion of life on the stages by making his characters talk in a natural manner.

One special point to be noted about Galsworthy's dialogue is its condensed brevity. Every word contributes either to the development of the plot or the revelation of character.

He does not use words and phrases which have no relevance to plot or character but are likely to amuse the audience. Harold Williams says, "His dialogue is the speech of men who are living beings facing the exigencies of the moment in an ordinary world. There is no artifice in the conversation of his characters. Nevertheless his dialogue is not merely a mechanical record of things said in the real world.....Mr. Galsworthy's dialogue is the most plain in and unadorned matter-of-fact, but he understands the two arts of omission and arrangement, and, in consequence, his plays have a directness and economy in method unequalled by any living English writer."

In the art of dialogue Galsworthy is different from Shaw. His dialogue is homely, rather than brilliant, informative rather than racy. Shaw is ready to sacrifice the normal tone of conversation for the sake of an epigram. But the leading characteristic of Galsworthy's dramatic dialogue is the complete harmony of the characters with the dialogue. The characters speak in their own way with an admirable sense of economy and restraint.

### Atmosphere

Atmosphere is the spirit that pervades an entire play. Galsworthy heightens the tragic poignancy of his plays by the creation of a tragic atmosphere. In *Strife* we are told in the very beginning that a fight is going on between the employers and workers of a factory. After that every word that is spoken heightens the sense of misery,



suffering and tension. For instance, when Mr. Wilder complains that the room of Underwood is excessively hot we are painfully aware of the fact that thousands of labourers are shivering in the cold. The atmosphere of conflict and tension continues to hold the audience even when the play closes, because, although a compromise has been arrived at, the stalwarts of the two sides, Anthony and Richards remain unreconciled. As Coats says, "In *Justice, The Fugitive* and *The Mob* we are oppressed by a sense of inevitably impending gloom."

### Stage Directions

In Shakespeare's days there was a bare stage having no 'stage property's at all. Shakespear's only Stage Directions are "Enter....." or "Exit.....". The modern plays are, on the other hand, written to be put up on a stage which can be moulded to produce any effect. The modern dramatist feels that he can reveal character by means of clothes, arrangement of the furniture, decoration in the room, type of pictures on the walls, types of books and magazines on the tables and other associated objects. He has no need to describe these things in the dialogue as Shakespeare had to do. The dramatist gives detailed stage directions and need not describe these things in the Exposition.

The producers and the actors also know what exact age, dress, appearance and setting the dramastist had in mind when he wrote the play. It also helps those who are reading the play for pleasure.

Galsworthy observes economy and concentration of effect in writing his Stage Directions. He writes brief and terse directions for the use of the producer and actor. His remarks create an atmosphere and have a bearing on the action and situation. Thus Galsworthy's Stage Directions heighten his dramatic effects.

### Style

Galsworthy was one of those writers who have a very fine prose style. His prose was effective because of its conciseness and concentration. This we specially notice in his long and sustained passages in the novels. In the plays his style is direct, easy, vivid and colloquial. Each speech suits the nature and temperament of the character. The style adapts itself to each speaker. That is way it is so effective.

### Conclusion

Galsworthy has created a large number of living characters in his plays. He knows how to tell a good story and create dramatic situations. His dialogues are crisp and witty and contribute to the development of plot and character. He knows how to create suspense and a proper atmosphere in a play. He has a clear-cut theory of drama and he has faithfully followed it in the writing of his plays. All this makes him one of the most polished dramatic craftsmen of the present age.



## XIV

## GALSWORTHY AS A TRAGIC DRAMATIST

## A specialist in tragedies

Galsworthy cast all plays in the tragic mould. Shaw made his mark as a writer of comedies. He was a laughing philosopher. Galsworthy, on the other hand, specialized in tragedies. Five of his plays end with the death of the principal character. These are *Justice*, *The Fugitive*, *The Mob*, *Loyalties*, and *Old English*. Other plays of Galsworthy in which the principal character does not die but there is tremendous suffering are *The Silver Box*, *Skin Game*, *Strife*, *The Pigeon*, *A Family Man*, *Windows*, *The Eldest Son*, *The Forest* and *A Bit of Love*. Even his comedies, such as *Joy*, and *Foundations* are not wholly free from the tragic atmosphere.

## Earlier tragedies

The earliest writers of tragedies were the Greeks. These tragedies introduced a hero who was a man having an outstanding personality and character. He incurred the wrath of the gods by some conscious or unconscious sin. The gods meted out some terrible punishment to him. The hero fought bravely but was ultimately crushed down by the mighty gods. Thus Oedipus in complete ignorance killed his own father and married his mother. He thus broke the divine law which prohibits patricide and incest. The gods, therefore, crushed him down.

In these plays tragedy was caused by Destiny or the angry gods. We admire the hero for his heroic struggle and we are filled with awe and terror when this outstanding personality is crushed down by Fate.

In Shakespearean tragedy character took the place of Destiny as the cause of the tragedy. The hero was a king or an outstanding personality. He had all the noble qualities but had one weakness which was called the tragic flaw. Thus Othello is a great General and a very noble person. He has all the fine qualities of character but he has one weakness. He is jealous by temperament and he readily believes the villain, Iago, who tells him that his noble wife Desdemona, is unchaste. He suffers terribly but does not think coolly whether this could be true of his saintly wife. He is a man of quick action and so without proper investigation he kills his wife. When he comes to know about deception practised on him by Iago he kills himself. Hamlet is a noble prince and has all the qualities under the sun. But he has one great weakness : he thinks too much and cannot act. If he had been a man of action like Othello, he would have immediately killed his uncle who had murdered his father and there would have been no tragedy. If Othello had thought out the issues coolly like Hamlet and investigated the whole case he would have realized that his wife was the noblest lady alive and there would have been no tragedy.



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In this tragedy the hero suffers terribly and dies at the end only because of a flaw in his own character. We admire the heroic struggles of the hero and are filled with awe and terror at his downfall.

**Social tragedies**

The tragedies of Galsworthy are quite different from the classical tragedy as well as the romantic tragedy. He eliminates the supernatural agencies completely. He also eliminates heroes. His chief character is a weak individual who is overwhelmed by powerful social forces which grind him to bits. As Coates has said, "To focus attention on an outstanding individual of high rank or noble character would be to divert it from the communal group whose struggles are primarily to be studied. Even when eminent personalities represent the groups, it will be in their representative rather than in their personal capacity that they assume importance. It is avowedly in the social relationships binding ordinary people, and not in the breast of some star personages, that the tragic conflict is supposed to take place."

**The real villain**

Along with the hero the villain is also eliminated from social tragedy. Galsworthy would agree with Meredith when he says :

"In tragic life, God wot,

No villain need be : Passions spin the plot."

The sufferings of individuals in modern society are caused by persons who are not wicked. They have the best of motives but they are moved by the passions and prejudices of the class to which they belong. They cause misery to their fellow men when they enforce the laws and conventions of society without imagination and sympathetic understanding. The real villains of modern society are the invisible social forces which ruthlessly crush down weak individuals in the same way as the gods did in Greek tragedy and the villains did in Shakespearean tragedy.

**His characters**

Galsworthy takes his characters from the life around him. He does not think it necessary to introduce kings and great personalities in his tragedies. According to him, the life of an ordinary labourer is as important as that of a king or a prince. The labourer or any individual in the plays of Galsworthy does not stand as an individual. He stands as a representative of a group or class of people and this fact enhances his importance as a character. He knows life well and he draws his characters with tremendous insight and penetration. They are ordinary living beings in whom we can recognize our own selves. Most of them are ordinary mediocre persons. We share their feelings and we are greatly touched when we find that they have become victims of the social forces. We share their sufferings.



## Conflict

In this social tragedy the conflict is between the individual and a social institution. It is an unequal fight and the puny little human being is easily overwhelmed by the powerful social force. The tragic characters of Galsworthy—Jones, Falder, Dancy, Ruth, Freda, Chloe, Roberts etc.—are weaklings and they are easily crushed when strong social forces confront them. In *The Silver Box* the rolling engine of law crushes down the Jones family.

“The real villain is neither Jones nor Jack Barthwick, but the judicial system for which we are all responsible. The audience is in the docks confronted with crime of having approved the system.” In *Strife* the conflict is between capital and labour. In *Skin Game* the conflict is between the landed aristocracy and the manufacturing classes. In *Loyalties* there is a conflict between different loyalties. In all the plays the conflict is between powerful institutions and social forces.

## Tremendous waste

In the conflicts between social forces small individuals are crushed. This causes tremendous waste. Poor Chloe is crushed in the conflict between aristocracy and the class of industrial magnates. Thousands of families of labourers starve and shiver in the cold and Mrs. Roberts dies when there is a clash between capital and labour. The senseless legal system which does not differentiate between a hardened criminal and social weakling and the cruel prison system which keeps human beings in solitary confinement, ruin and waste poor Falder's life. Galsworthy's tragedies all depict the waste of precious human lives caused by the working of inhuman and invisible social forces.

## Dramatic Irony

Galsworthy uses dramatic irony with telling effect in his plays. It is ironical that the machinery of justice which was devised to protect the poor and the weak only protects the rich and the strong and crushes down the poor and the weak. In *Strife* after five months of strike which causes starvation to the workers and losses to the employers an agreement is arrived at. It is ironical that this agreement is the same as had been worked out before the fight started. In *Escape* a man who evades the demands of justice and escapes from prison before his time, is received by the world with open arms, while a person who remains in prison for his full term is punished by the world still more. It is ironical that in spite of man's inherent nobility and sense of justice and fair play, a large number of people come to sorrow, suffering and tragic death.

It is ironical that the persons enforcing the laws of society are generally honest, sincere and dutiful and yet their actions result in the wastage of thousands of innocent lives every day.



### Themes

For the themes of his tragedies Galsworthy only looked at the life around him. Galsworthy was intimately connected with law courts and so ten of his plays are connected with the system of justice. The problems of capital and labour are dealt with in *Strife*. The evils of shelter homes and poor law are presented in *The Pigeon*. He also finds material for his plays in family relationships—the loyalty or antagonism between husband and wife, the struggle of a woman to escape from an unhappy marriage, and the revolt of youth against parental authority. He also wrote tragedies to present the plight of drunkards, criminals and prostitutes whose lives have been wrecked by the laws and conventions of society. He also finds themes for his plays in the clash of different castes, groups, religions and classes. In all these themes he finds materials for poignant tragedies.

### Spectacle of human suffering

In his social tragedies Galsworthy depicts the tragic social conditions in different walks of life. He shows the sad spectacle of tremendous human suffering in the lives of a vast majority of ordinary human beings. They do not die but lead lives of terrible agony. The collective suffering of ordinary individuals assumes a tragic importance.

### Remediable

There was no remedy for a tragedy which was caused by the working of Fate or the anger of the gods. A victim of the wrath of the gods has to suffer in silence. He must continue to pray to the very gods who are punishing him. But social tragedy is caused by human folly and so there is hope that it can be avoided. Most of the troubles of life can be avoided if there is human understanding and sympathetic approach to the problems.

### Tragic Appeal

Some of the critics feel that Galsworthy's tragic appeal is not so great as that of Greek tragedy or Shakespearean tragedy. They say that while the earlier tragedies moved the spectators and readers to awe and terror, the tragedies of Galsworthy move us only to pity and compassion. Other critics say that the struggles of the modern man against unjust social forces are as moving as the struggles of the heroes of the past, against the gods.

In this connection we cannot do better than quote Prof. Nicoll. He says, "Judged by the standards of Grecian and Elizabethan art Galsworthy's plays are not high tragedies. There is then no single hero who stands forward as a dominant figure, rising to loftier height than his fellow men. But we cannot judge the art of present day by the standards of the past. That was the error of the pseudo-classical critics of the Augustan period. If we come to essentials we find that Mr. Galsworthy's plays do not fall, as Sir Arthur Pinero's fall, into pathos. The author possesses despite his kindliness of heart



a genuine tragic firmness. We do not feel pity for the fate of Falder so much as we feel awe in contemplating the mighty millstones of justice, ruthless and fateful in their silent power. The tragic atmosphere dominates the play : tears are useless and vain. The heroes of Galsworthy's dramas are the unseen fates of modern existence, against which we poor mortals can but pitifully cry out in moments of desperation and horror." □

## XV

### GALSWORTHY'S ART OF CHARACTERIZATION

#### The importance of character

Galsworthy is very careful about the delineation of character in his plays because he regards character as the most important element of his dramatic technique. Galsworthy says that character is the foundation of plot. Aristotle regarded character as more important than plot. But Galsworthy feels that plot is subservient to character. "The perfect dramatist" he says, "rounds up his characters and facts within the ring-fence of a dominant idea which fulfils the craving of his spirit; having got them there he suffers them to live their own lives. Take care of character ; action and dialogue will take care of themselves."

At another place he says, "The dramatist who hangs his characters to his plot, instead of hanging his plot to his character is guilty of cardinal sin."

#### Living beings

Galsworthy draws his characters from his observation of persons around him. His characters are, therefore, living human beings of flesh and blood. They are all English men and women having the common human virtues and frailties. He has only transferred living men and women from the home, the office, factory, the law court and the street to his stage.

#### Common people

Galsworthy deals only with common people who, he thinks, are as important in life as kings and princes. There are no heroes or villains in his plays. He does not draw tragic heroes of the dimension of Macbeth or King Lear or Othello. Nor does he draw villains like Iago or Bosola.

His tragic figures are all ordinary men. Dancy is a retired Captain ; Falder is an ordinary clerk ; Roberts is a labourer and Jones is a poor man. They are pathetic rather than heroic figures. It is society and its institutions and organizations that play the role of villain in the tragedies of Galsworthy.



**Infinite variety**

There is an infinite variety in his portrait gallery. There is, on the one hand, a large and interesting group of characters, mostly of conservative or aristocratic leanings, who are upholders of tradition. They are interested in maintaining the established social order. Their selfishness, class consciousness and traditional prejudices are responsible for keeping alive social evils whose removal would make society healthier and the people happier. Confronting this class are those who are rebels against this social order. Their discontent brings them in constant clash with the privileged classes. There are other characters who may be described as victims of the social order rather than rebels since they are too weak to stand against it and can only suffer the misery of injustice. Then there are the persons who have been made wrecks by society and are now being hunted down as outcasts. There are also some sympathetic and kind-hearted persons.

The machinery of justice is represented by advocates, magistrates and judges. Then there are commercial magnates, high financiers, manufacturers, company directors and shareholders. The Army, the Navy and the Church also contribute to the *Dramatis Personae*. There are artists, house-keepers, Landladies, governesses and servants. The working people and rustic characters find their places and the unfortunates of both sexes, including some convicts, complete the portrait gallery.

**Their function**

The characters are introduced not for their own sake but for the function that they perform in the plays. Shakespeare has created great characters like Falstaff who lead a life of their own, quite independent of the plays in which they appear. Galsworthy's characters are introduced only to bring out the social problem which is presented in that play.

In order to bring out the conflict in the plays, Galsworthy often presents pairs of contrasting characters. Thus we have Anthony and Roberts, Barthwick and Jones, Hillchrist and Hornblower.

**Types rather than individuals**

The characters represent ideas and points of view and contribute to the discussion of a problem confronting society. They are types rather than individuals. Thus Hillchrist represents land-owning aristocrats. Hornblower stands for the owners of industry. Anthony represents capital and Roberts represents labour. Barthwick stands for the rich and Jones for the poor. Falder is the common clerk who represents the ordinary lower middle-class person, romantic in nature and suffering from want of money.

**Highly emotional**

Galsworthy's characters are highly emotional persons. But they do not express their feelings eloquently. Their expression is



subdued and not verbose. Like a typical Englishman they believe in the deliberate under-statement. There is much truth in Galsworthy's own statement: "About Shaw's plays one might say that they contain characters who express emotions which they do not possess. About mine one might say that they contain characters who possess emotions which they cannot express."

### Flat characters

Galsworthy's characters are flat characters. They remain the same from the beginning to the end of the play. There is no development in them: They are static and not flexible or dynamic. As Skemp has said, "we do not find development of character under the stress of circumstances; and here we come to the chief dramatic weakness of the plays. For a satisfying dramatic effect definite progress is needed alike in character and in action."

John Anthony and David Roberts in *Strife* do not grow or change under the influence of events: they are simply broken. In *Justice* Falder remains to the end what he was in the beginning—weak, but with a nervous quality that drives him in despair to desperate action. The only person who changes and becomes a little kind-hearted is James.

### Unforgettable characters

Galsworthy's plays show a wide range of characters. They range from Company Directors to ordinary labourers, from Members of Parliament to drunkards and criminals, from idealists to accidental thieves, from an aristocratic lady to a charwoman. They are all taken from life. The characters of Galsworthy are not immortal creations like those of Shakespeare, but many of them are certainly unforgettable. We can never forget the rigidity of Anthony, the leadership qualities of Roberts, the simplicity and sincerity of Mrs. Jones and the pathetic figure of Falder.



## XVI

### GALSWORTHY'S ART OF PLOT CONSTRUCTION

#### What is a plot?

Plot is that technique of the drama which imparts form to the action represented. The success of the drama depends on the form in which the material is shaped. The dramatist presents the story in such a way as to arouse interest, to intensify the suspense and to sustain it until he is ready to allay it. The logical sequence of events should be so presented that the interest may tend to become cumulative and the dramatist should be able to count upon a steady rise in interest as the play rises from exposition to its crisis, climax and the catastrophe. Sustained interest heightened by each event is the key



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to the success of the dramatist and unless he can achieve this, however interesting the story may be, success cannot be assured. In his book, *The Inn of Tranquillity* Galsworthy says 'A good plot is that sure edifice which rises out of the interplay of circumstances on temperament and of temperament on circumstances, within the enclosing atmosphere of an idea.'

**Plot subordinate to character**

Galsworthy made plots subordinate to character. He reversed the relationship between plot and character held by Aristotle. With Aristotle plot comes first, character second. With Galsworthy character comes first, plot second. He says, "The dramatist who hangs his characters to his plot, instead of hanging his plot to his characters is guilty of cardinal sin."

**Importance of theme**

The plots of Galsworthy are based on ideas and hang on characters. Each play of Galsworthy has a theme and every incident in the play contributes to the furtherance of the theme. Every play has a message to convey and all the ideas contribute to that effect. In fact, every word contributes to the exposition of the theme. *Strife* directs our attention to the suffering of the workers due to the lack of understanding between capital and labour.

*Justice* dwells on the evils of the English legal system and the cruelty of solitary confinement. *The Silver Box* illustrates the old adage that there is one law for the rich and another for the poor.

**The central point**

Galsworthy's plots are based on a situation or an incident and the reaction of a few characters to that situation. One single incident or situation forms the central point of his plot construction. The theft of money is the starting point in *Loyalties* and the plot develops as a result of the reaction of different characters to the suspicion that Dancy has stolen the money. The starting point and the central point of *The Silver Box* is the theft of the silver cigar case. *Strife* shows the consequences of a prolonged strike in a factory. In *Justice* the single act of Falder of altering a cheque shapes his entire destiny.

**Plot construction**

The plots of Galsworthy are well constructed. They start with a good exposition and then lead to a crisis and then to a climax and the inevitable catastrophe. The suspense is kept up right up to the end.

The Exposition gives us an idea of the initial situation and the nature of the complications that are likely to arise. The interest thus aroused is never allowed to flag. Every incident leads the plot directly towards the climax. In *Justice* when the two advocates plead for and against Falder we are kept in suspense till the judgment is



announced. The prison scenes lift the veil on Falder's misery and rouse our pity to such a point that we long to see him released. When we begin to heave a sigh of relief at the possibility of his being reinstated in his old place, James How imposes an impossible condition on him. However, the obstacle vanishes when Cokeson hints at the possibility of a divorce and we think that there is still hope for Falder, when the policeman appears on the scene and poor Falder is doomed. "The reader or the spectator is on tenterhooks, for example, during the auction scene in *The Skin Game*; much depends on who will win in the tug of war." (Coates).

In *Loyalties* we almost hold our breath right up to the time when the mystery is resolved. We suspect Dancy but there is no proof against him and all the Christians support him. So we expect the case to turn against the Jew, De Levis. The proof of Dancy's guilt comes from a strange source. We are, however, relieved when we hear of his wife's eternal loyalty to him. Then Dancy's suicide gives us the biggest surprise. Thus our interest is kept up throughout the play. In *Strife* the determined attitude of Anthony and Roberts keeps us throughout in suspense. In *The Silver Box* we do not know whether Jack Barthwick would be punished in the same manner as Jones. So the suspense is kept right up to the end. There is a dexterous management of suspense, in *The Eldest Son* where previous to the arrival of Sir William at a critical point in the play, the members of the family anxiously discuss what his attitude to Bill and Freda is likely to be. Thus the surprising turns which incidents take in his plays keep up our interest in them from the beginning to the end.

### Variety in construction

Galsworthy's plays exhibit a lot of variety in construction. Some of them have their crisis in the very beginning. Some, like *The Pigeons* and *The Foundations* have no crisis. *The Skin Game* and *The Fugitive* have a double crisis. In *Loyalties* and *Justice* the internal conflict is outside the play.

Sometimes he uses the technique of parallelism. In *The Silver Box* there is a parallelism between Jack and Jones. The same thing is noticed in *The Skin Game* between Hillchrist and Hornblower.

### Based on common incidents

Galsworthy has built his plots from everyday happenings and common occurrences of daily life. An ordinary case of theft and defamiation (*Loyalties*), the forging of a cheque (*Justice*), a simple theft (*The Silver Box*), an illicit love between the eldest son of an aristocratic family and a housemaid (*The Eldest Son*), a wife's infidelity to her husband (*The Fugitive*), a common strike in a factory (*Strife*)—such simple happenings have been used by him to build up his plots.



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**No sub-plots**

Galsworthy does not have any sub-plots or plots within plots. His plots are simple and straightforward with no complexities. They are realistic and naturalistic. Nothing startling happens in his plays.

**His dramatic action**

Galsworthy has summarised the cardinal principle of the dramatic action in his plays in the following words :

"True dramatic action is that the characters do, at once contrary, as it were, to expectation, and yet because they have already done other things. No dramatist should let his audience know what is coming ; but neither should he suffer his characters to act without making his audience feel that those actions are in harmony with temperament, and arise from previous known actions, together with the temperaments and previous known actions of the other characters in the play."

Galsworthy introduces dramatic action in his plays beautifully. In *The Silver Box* the action of John Barthwick while closing the window against the sobbing of Mrs. Jones' little child helps to intensify the dramatic action. Sometimes, in moments of high tension when words will not come, a symbolic action is made more significant and revealing than any utterance could have been. The dumb show in *Justice* expresses the misery of Falder more eloquently than words could have expressed. As Shaw once remarked, Galsworthy can make a coroner's inquest dramatic.

**Plot workmanship**

Skemp has summed up Galsworthy's plot workmanship thus : "Galsworthy's plot workmanship is excellent. He realizes every step of the action, uses detail in incident with most telling effect, and never fails in probability. All necessary facts, including those preceding the action of the play, he brings into the framework of his plot with perfect ease.....He uses contrast and comparison admirably..... Dramatic suspense, when at an important point the action hangs in the balance for a moment, occurs less often than we should expect.... Though he is too good a playwright to forget the value of the dramatic moment, Mr. Galsworthy never strains his material to this end--- His method is to reveal meaning in every moment rather than to lead up to a few great moments."

**Conclusion**

Galsworthy's plots are simple and life-like. They are not the unwinding of a chain of complicated happenings, so intricately contrived that the interest mainly depends on the ingenuity of the story. Rather, his plots are the unfolding of a situation with its effects on the characters and the reactions of the characters to that situation. To Galsworthy a human being is the best plot. He frames his plot by giving us the reactions of his characters to a simple situation.



## XVII

## GALSWORTHY'S NATURALISM AND REALISM

## Naturalism and Realism

Naturalism is a term used in drama to describe what was called Realism in the novel. A naturalist is wedded to the actual. He truthfully describes life as he sees it. He does not invent : he only records what he sees. He does not make his world beautiful or strange, but as familiar and real as possible.

Realism aims at representing life as nearly as possible as a scientist sees it. It imitates the impartiality and impersonality of the scientist in seeing life truthfully. It is opposed to the romantic point of view which idealizes things and invests them with a glamour not their own.

## Galsworthy as a naturalist

The dominant quality of Galsworthy's plays in naturalism. He depicts the familiar aspects of everyday life in a most natural manner. He explores the dramatic possibilities of the commonplace. He closely observes the life around him and tries to create in his plays an atmosphere of absolute truth. The naturalistic technique which he employed with great success is described by him thus : "The aim of the dramatist employing the naturalistic technique is obviously to create such an illusion of actual life passing on the stage as to compel the spectator to pass through an experience of his own, to think, and talk, and move with the people he sees thinking, talking, moving in front of him. A false phrase, a single word out of tune or time, will destroy that illusion and spoil the surface as surely as a stone heaved into a still pool shatters the image seen there."

## Not photographic

Galsworthy, however, does not reproduce life like a photographer. He does not indiscriminately reproduce what he sees. Great art does not show life as it is : it shows life seen through a temperament. Galsworthy gives us a slice of life as visualised through his temperament.

## Realistic themes

The themes of his plays are the problems of English society of his time. In *The Silver Box* he describes the fact, which he observed in the law courts of England, that there is no equality between the rich and poor before the law. In *Loyalties* he describes how the loyalties of people come in conflict with each other.

He is absolutely realistic in the treatment of his themes. In *Strife* he states the point of view of capital as well as that of labour objectively and impartially. He wanted to be so truthful that before writing the prison scenes in *Justice* he interviewed convicts who had undergone months of solitary confinement and he also interviewed



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prison governors and warders. Galsworthy's themes are all taken from real life and they are treated realistically. As Skemp has said, "In all his plots there is not a single incident foreign to common experience."

**Realistic dialogues**

His dialogues are the natural speech of common people. His language is free from artificiality and poetic flights. It is the language of the English people met in the streets of London.

**Realistic characters**

Galsworthy has taken his characters from the life around him. They are living human beings whom we meet any day in our lives. Even the chief characters of his tragedies are ordinary Englishmen and women possessed of common human weaknesses. As Shalit has said, "His characters are always drawn from the average man and woman of our immediate surroundings."

**Conclusion**

Thus Galsworthy's themes, his situations, his dialogues, his characters, are all taken from life. He was a reformer but that did not let him stray into the magic world of fancy and idealism. He sees life steadily and sees it whole. His plays are the social chronicles of contemporary England. At one place Galsworthy has observed, "Naturalistic art is like a steady lamp, held up from time to time in whose light things will be seen for a space clearly and in due proportion, freed from the mists of prejudice and partisanship." In the words of Coats, "Galsworthy is as relentlessly realistic in almost all his plays as in his novels and short stories. He shows us things visualised through his temperament, not a many people would prefer to see them. An incorruptible lover of truth, he attempts to shape all his plots and problems with the greatest impartiality, allowing both sides to air their opinions and throwing light on their ideas in all possible ways."



## XVIII

**HIS DEFECTS**

Galsworthy is a great dramatist but it cannot be denied that there are some blemishes or shortcomings in his work. These are summarised below :

**1. His characters are flat**

Galsworthy has written Problem Plays. He is more interested in the discussion of a problem than in the creation of living human beings. His characters are the embodiments of ideas. Their actions are so constructed as to bring about a full exposition of those ideas.



His characters remain flat. They do not grow as a reaction to different situations. He sees them at one point. They are real enough at that point. But they do not grow, as real human beings grow, from situation to situation. Falder in *Justice* remains the same from the beginning to the end of the play. Anthony and Roberts (*Strife*) are broken at the end but they do not change. This is not life-like. Human beings do not stand for fixed ideas. Human nature is very complex. Human beings react in different situations. We, therefore, often have the feeling that Galsworthy has not been able to breathe a soul into his characters.

## 2. His dialogue is not effective

His dialogues are written in good prose but they are not very effective on the stage. Shaw's dialogues are a feast of wit and repartee. Galsworthy's dialogues lack this brilliance. They are somewhat dull. Shaw's long plays are kept alive by the charm of his conversation. Galsworthy's dialogues have the dullness of common, everyday conversation.

## 3. His characters are small beings

Galsworthy has not created any great personalities like Othello or Hamlet or Macbeth or Falstaff or Dr. Faustus. His characters are petty beings who are easily crushed down by strong social forces. They do not struggle heroically up to the end. They easily give up the fight. Falder is a weak clerk who, when faced with a devastating situation, seeks refuge in suicide. Roberts has some leadership qualities but he is unable to carry his people with him. Hillchrist does not have the magnanimity and refinement of an aristocrat; he is petty and mean. It is not necessary that a great man must be a king or a general. Even a middle class individual can have the spark of greatness. But Galsworthy's characters lack that spark.

## 4. Galsworthy's tragedies do not create awe and terror

The great tragedies of the world strike awe and terror in our hearts. Galsworthy's tragedies only produce pity and compassion. The heroes of Sophocles struggle bravely against the all-powerful gods and we admire them even when they are crushed. Macbeth struggles heroically up to the end against adversities created by a flaw in his own character. The final fall of these great personalities creates in us feelings of admiration, awe and terror. Galsworthy, on the other hand, shows us weak individuals victimised by the laws and conventions of society. We sympathise with them but we are not moved to any stronger emotion. Prof. Nicoll says that Galsworthy has given a new dimension to tragedy by showing the waste caused by the destruction of innocent human beings by social forces which are as strong today as the gods were in the past. Waste is certainly one of the elements of great tragedy. But when a petty clerk or a mean drunkard is crushed down and his life is wasted we only feel pity for him. And pity is not a tragic emotion.



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Galsworthy does not have a strong feeling for his hero. He is like a judge on a bench reviewing the conflict with cold impartiality. When the dramatist himself does not have strong feeling for his hero, how can we be tremendously moved when he falls?

## 5. His themes are trivial

The great dramas of the world deal with the fundamental emotions of the human heart like love, jealousy, hatred, bitterness, madness etc. The vision of Galsworthy, on the other hand, is narrowed down to the petty problems of daily life. A small forgery or a petty theft or a strike in a small factory, a defect in the prison administration or in the marriage laws cannot create deep emotion in us.

## 6. He makes the stage his pulpit

Galsworthy was at heart a social reformer and he wanted to use the stage to bring the evils of society to the notice of the public. He felt that a lot of things were rotten in the state of Denmark and it was his business to set them right. For instance, he felt that solitary confinement was a very cruel practice, that the poor did not get justice in law courts, that most of our social, political, economic and religious conflicts were due to the lack of understanding and sympathy. He wrote plays to drive home these points. But art is one thing and morality another and the two should not be mixed. At times Galsworthy seems to be a preacher rather than an artist. Shaw is a much greater sinner in this respect but Galsworthy too has this fault.

## 7. He has no humour

Galsworthy is singularly lacking in humour. Shaw makes his lengthy dialogues charming by the use of wit and humour. His long plays dealing with dry themes like evolution are made interesting only because of humour. Shakespeare uses humour even in his tragedies. After the horrible murder of Duncan by Macbeth a porter comes to the stage and amuses us by imagining that he is a porter of hell-gate. This amuses us and relieves the tension. Galsworthy's plays, however, have no humour at all. His pessimism was never relieved by laughter.

## Conclusion

These are formidable defects and would prevent a dramatist from coming to the front rank. Still Galsworthy has an important place in modern drama because of the structure of his drama, his humanism, the sincerity of his art and the faithful picture that he has drawn of the life around him with all its conflicts and problems.



## XIX

GALSWORTHY'S CONTRIBUTION TO MODERN  
BRITISH DRAMA

Galsworthy has made a signal contribution to modern British drama. He has written about 30 plays, and they all deal with the problems faced by the average man of today. He presents all aspects of a problem realistically and impartially. He makes us think. He offers no solutions and most of his plays end on a question mark.

**His naturalism**

Galsworthy is naturalistic in his dramatic material as well as his technique. He presents life as he sees it around him truthfully and objectively. He has no mysticism, symbolism or romanticism. He does not present larger-than-life heroes who stand on stilts. He shows the tragic waste in the lives of common people like us. The dialogue is life-like. The stage Directions are short and revealing.

At the same time, Galsworthy is not photographic in his realism. His plays are the best example of art seen through a temperament.

**His economy and self-restraint**

Economy and self-restraint are the main characteristics of his art. He is serious and prosaic because he deals with commonplace characters and everyday life. He does not interest himself in the soul and the entire personality of his characters. He paints them objectively as he observed them in real life. He practises strict economy in his material as well as in his language. He does not allow himself any poetic flights and he strictly avoids any display of sentiment. He works within the narrow limits of reason and realism. His economy and restraint, subtle suggestions and unspoken thoughts are more effective than the loud expressions of other dramatists.

**Art and morality**

The modern dramatist is pulled in two different directions. On the one side there are the demands of art and on the other there are the demands of life. Should he work on the basis of 'art for art's sake' or on the principles of 'art for the sake of life'? Should he, like Oscar Wilde, aim only at entertainment or should he preach openly like Shaw? Galsworthy believes in the purity of art and he does not preach openly. At the same time he wants social systems to be reformed and conflicts to be ended so that human suffering can be reduced. His plays are artistically conceived but his remedy for evils is ethical. He makes us realize that all conflicts can be ended if there is imaginative approach to problems and human understanding of the other person's point of view. The artistic mode and creative feeling are so beautifully blended with a distinct moral purpose in



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Galsworthy's work that it will be difficult to find any other author who can so successfully ride these two horses together and maintain a nice balance.

**Social forces**

He has brought one innovation to English tragedy. He introduces in his *Dramatis Personae* a new powerful character. This is society with its impersonal laws and conventions and its cruel inhuman administration. This takes the place of the gods of classical tragedy and brings the characters to their doom. There man was powerless against the mighty gods. Here also when the individual comes into conflict with this powerful social force he is brutally crushed down and his life is completely wasted. This tragedy of 'waste' is Galsworthy's contribution to world drama.

**Tragic atmosphere**

Another innovation of his is the tragic atmosphere that pervades his plays and does not end even when the curtain falls. The play ends but the tension continues in the minds of the audience and the readers. The author's triumph lies in suggesting the tragedy that is likely to happen after the last scene is over.

In *Justice* we are painfully aware of the miserable life that awaits Ruth Honeywill. In *Strife* when the curtain falls we find the two principal men completely broken. We can imagine how tragic their subsequent life is likely to be. The wife of Roberts has died and he has no "home" now. In *The Silver Box* we can imagine what suffering awaits Mrs. Jones and her poor children after the play is over. The curtain falls but the tragic atmosphere dominates our minds.

**Literary excellence**

Society and its laws and conventions and the fashions and manners of the people have changed considerably since Galsworthy's days. Many of the problems dealt with by him do not agitate people's minds now as they did in his days. Yet his Plays continue to be popular on the stage and among readers. That is sure sign of his literary excellence and super craftsmanship.

**Conclusion**

Galsworthy has brought about a beautiful synthesis of art and morality, of drama for entertainment and drama for instruction. He is not so witty and brilliant as Shaw but he has a greater balance, restraint and artistic power. His tragedies showing the waste of precious human lives move us immensely. Galsworthy has, therefore, secured an honourable niche for himself in modern English drama.



## XX

SELECTED LITERARY CRITICISM ON  
GALSWORTHY AS A DRAMATIST

( 1 )

**Albert on Galsworthy as a Social Reformer :**

"Galsworthy was a social reformer, objectively and impartially posing a problem, showing always both sides of the question, and leaving his audience to think out the answer."

( 2 )

**Albert on Galsworthy's Sympathy for Victims :**

"Galsworthy obviously feels a warm sympathy for the victims of social injustice and especially for the poor and downtrodden..... Galsworthy calls into play the feelings as well as the mind of his audience."

( 3 )

**Albert on Galsworthy's Art as a Dramatist :**

"His characters are well studied and his psychological insight is particularly well seen in his studies of internal conflict. In the construction of his plays he shows a fine sense of form and the best of them are excellent stage pieces. His dialogue and situations are natural."

( 4 )

**Cunliffe on Galsworthy's Plots and Characters :**

".....Galsworthy despises plot-construction, but his frequent neglect of this element of drama has two resulting weaknesses. In the first place, his characters often fail to develop within the action of the play, the vast majority are the same at the end as they were at the beginning, the impression conveyed is that of a dramatic situation, not of the evermoving current of life. In the second place, Galsworthy is inclined, for lack of a well-constructed plot, to build up his characters symmetrically, one balanced against the other as in *Strife*, *The Pigeon*, *The Skin Game* and this adds to one's sense of artificiality."

( 5 )

**Skemp on Galsworthy's Plot-construction :**

".....Mr. Galsworthy's plot workmanship is excellent. He realizes every step of the action, uses detail in incident with most telling effect, and never falls in probability. All necessary facts, including those preceding the action of the play he brings into the framework of his plot with perfect ease, without using the clumsy mechanism of the inset narrative.....He uses contrast and comparison admirably.....Dramatic suspense when at an important



point the action hangs in the balance for a moment, occurs less often than we should expect.....Though he is too good a playwright to forget the value of the tense dramatic moment, Mr. Galsworthy never strains his material to this end, and here he stands in striking contrast to Shaw, Pinero, Hartlebein, Sudermann—indeed to most modern dramatists. His method is to reveal meaning in every moment rather than to lead up to a few great moments. He combines intellectual with emotional appeal, not only making the spectator feel, but also stimulating him to inquire the significance of the situation which moves him."

( 6 )

#### Cazamian on Galsworthy's Dramatic Art :

"The drawing of the characters is here (in dramas) more firm than in the novels ; and reduced to essential elements, the plots proceed with more energy. The dialogues keep half-way between the mere photography of familiar conversation, and the conventional language of the stage. Vivacious, strong, soberly moving, these dramatic comedies are instinct, almost always, with a very safe realism and their high artistic quality would be unexceptionable, if all the characters were equally convincing, or if the action stripped down to a limit did not at times seem a little thin."

( 7 )

#### Cunliffe on Galsworthy's Style and Dramatic art :

"He is not a born story teller or dramatist, and though he always writes well—his style is a never-failing pleasure. One has often a consciousness of thinness in his imaginative work. The beauty of his prose and his artistic sincerity may save much of his work from oblivion and it seems likely to be treasured by the few who can appreciate delicacy and subtlety and do not ask either for the excitement of a stirring action or for the intellectual stimulus of brilliant Paradox. He has no 'ism' to offer as a cure for all human ills. He sees men bound by class limitations—the poor by actual want, the rich by ignorance and prejudice—and he found no remedy except understanding and sympathy."

( 8 )

#### Cunliffe on Galsworthy's Characterization :

"Galsworthy has not Wells' narrative power or infectious enthusiasm for ideas or first-hand knowledge of the lower middle class. The qualities which give him a permanent place in the literature of the period are a very real sympathy for the lowest working class—the oppressed and outcast—and skill in analysis of character and emotion, especially of amorous passion in people of intelligence and refinement."



( 9 )

**Cunliffe on Galsworthy's Personality :**

"His eminence was recognized by his appointment to the Order of the Merit on the death of Thomas Hardy in 1928 and by the award of the Nobel Prize in 1932. These distinctions he accepted gladly. He had previously declined a knighthood which was almost thrust upon him during the war. His refusal was doubtless due to his desire to keep his war services for the wounded, in France and England, as free from public recognition as when they were given. Essentially modest and reserved he shrank from notoriety and made no attempt to exploit his literary fame, though he had a natural pleasure in official acknowledgement by competent authorities of the excellence of the literary work he had done. Of the group of novelists and playwrights who attracted attention (notice) during the first quarter of the century there was none who established himself more firmly in the affections of the public on both sides of the Atlantic."

( 10 )

**Marriot on Galsworthy's Personality :**

"His character was as simple as it was admirable. He was a born aristocrat, and looked it, he made other people feel 'second-eleven sort of fellows'; but he was intensely human and sympathetic and gave himself no air of superiority. He was an aristocrat with a conscience."

( 11 )

**Coats on Galsworthy's Sincerity and Objectivity :**

"The first thing we notice in reading the plays of Galsworthy is the evident sincerity of the writer, his desire to maintain artistic integrity of soul——. He is resolved like a good golfer to keep his eye firmly fixed on the object that is before him. He will see life steadily and see it whole, avoiding all artifice, sentimentality, and straining after effect."

( 12 )

**Cunliffe on Galsworthy's Sentimentality :**

"There are times when Galsworthy's sympathy slips over the line into sentimentality. St. Jon Ervine says, 'His pity often becomes undiscerning sentimentality that has no relation to any real thing and is extraordinarily irritating to those who are as compassionate as he, but are eager not to bog themselves in a morass of emotion.' Patrick Thompson pronounced 'him at heart a sentimentalist' and Marx Beerbohm accused him of selling his artistic birthright for a 'mess of pottage'. The fact is that though Galsworthy criticized very severely and acutely some Victorian points of view, he retained something of the Victorian sentiment. This was probably what H. G. Wells meant when he said that it was no wonder that Galsworthy described the



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Forsytes well, he was a Forsyte. It was the same thought that Wells said of himself that he was not a gentleman. A thorough gentleman Galsworthy undoubtedly was, and he exhibited the limitations as well as the excellences of the English form of that ideal. When towards the end of Galsworthy's career, the characteristic virtues of the English upper-class seemed on the point of disappearance, he invested their setting with a tender glow of sentiment. But he had no less pity for the victims of poverty and oppression, though he saw no way of escape for them, no remedy for their wrongs."

( 13 )

**Skemp on Galsworthy's Impartiality :**

"No contemporary writer is more strongly stirred to sympathetic emotion by the incidents he relates than Mr. Galsworthy, and yet none remains more vigorously impartial in his presentation of character."

( 14 )

**Coats on Galsworthy's Sympathy :**

"Another marked characteristic of Galsworthy, the dramatist is sympathy —— This capacity to identify himself with the experience of others is conspicuous in all Galsworthy's writings."

( 15 )

**Cunliffe on Galsworthy as an idealist :**

"He was not, like Wells, a propagandist of social reform and an advocate of international organization to secure the peace and welfare of the world. The P. E. N. Club, of which he was the moving spirit, was the vaguest and most innocuous of international efforts, aiming merely at the exchange of international thought as the only possible salvation of the world. Galsworthy was nothings of an organizer, nothing of a politician, always an idealist and artist."

( 16 )

**F. B. Millett on Galsworthy as a Social Dramatist :**

"Allied to the social dramas of Pinero and James are the less technically elaborate and more intellectually fastidious plays of John Galsworthy. More obtrusively than his novels, these emphasize his familiar doctrines, his encouragement of the evolution of social feeling that shall mitigate the evils done by ignorance and prejudice and his appeals for sympathy for the victims of a complex and sometimes unintentionally brute social order."

( 17 )

**Coats on Galsworthy as a Dramatist :**

"In the plays of Galsworthy moreover, there is an all-pervading feeling of pity and indignation. This spirit of compassion com-



bined with hot anger may be termed the most important of Galsworthy's characters, though it is the least, otherwise Galsworthy may be impartial as between one character and another, but he is not impartial when faced with human shortsightedness and folly which mark these characters what they are. The plays are really a tremendous indictment of the whole fabric of modern civilization, and at the same time a passionate appeal for understanding sympathy with the innocent victims of a social system for which all of us are responsible. Galsworthy is no spinner of pleasant tales and fantasies. He is a 'Daniel come to judgment'."

( 18 )

### Harold Williams on Galsworthy as a Realistic Dramatist :

"For Mr. Galsworthy in person naturalistic and poetic, prose dramas are 'situated far apart,' he is not only incapable of welding them, he can write only realistic dramas. The poetry of *The Little Dream* (1911) fails, and that play of fancy, *The Pigeon* (1912), is ineffective dramatically and tedious as a morality. Poetry is not impartial, judicial. Mr. Galsworthy is by nature cold, impartial, judicial. He can present on the stage the clash of character and character, the war of the classes, the struggle of the poor and the rich, and he never depresses the beam of justice with his own finger. As a dramatist he is noteworthy, but he is never the great artist, for he is never lost to himself, and the highest art is ever unconscious arising out of the depths of men's being from a region unexplored by the artist himself."

( 19 )

### Marriot on Galsworthy's Realism and Constructive Imagination :

"His sense of form is manifested in everything he wrote—poems, essays, short stories, novels, comedies, tragedies. Fortunately, for British drama he had constructive imagination. Without it he might have become another realist, giving us impressive 'close-ups' of life at its most damnable, after the manner of Gorki or Zola. But he had the artist's love of design, his feeling for significant detail. His plays deal with contrasts and are therefore symmetrical. They are never slices of life."

( 20 )

### Coats on the Motif of Galsworthy's Plays :

"To Galsworthy at least, the true intent of art is not only for delight, but also for enlightenment and education. Its chief function is moral.....Galsworthy's plays with one or two possible exceptions, conform to these conditions. In those of Shaw, the preaching is loud, emphatic, and unashamed...But Galsworthy is not primarily a missionary dramatist. He has indeed, a message to deliver but he takes care that it shall be artistically enforced by the long propagative speeches of one outstanding character."



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( 21 )

**A. C. Ward on the blend of Reason and Emotion :**

"Galsworthy was an advocate who deluded himself into believing that he was a presiding judge perpetually engaged in a dispassionate summing-up. He weighed the evidence ; he stated the case for each contestant ; his intellect was on both sides at once ; but his emotions disturbed the balance. On the one hand, a clear, cold, judicial statement, on the other, a presentation armed and coloured by emotion."

( 22 )

**Cazamian on the Revolt of the Heart and Thought in Galsworthy's Plays :**

"From the very fact, however, that his humanity is truly unbiased, and that his mood, in contrast to the hard judicial spirit, is one of tender sensitiveness, he does take sides, his plays, like his novels, breathe a generous and restrained revolt of the heart and of thought. Their technique has assimilated without effort the change which makes the new drama different from the old."

( 23 )

**Harold Williams on the Moral of Galsworthy's Plays :**

"The importance of Mr. Galsworthy's work in modern drama does not lie in its artistic power, but in its moral implication and the ethical force of the author. That 'the moral, is the key-note of all drama' is the chief article of his faith, and by this he means neither a moral that is propitiatory dramatization of a code approved by nine-tenths of the audience, nor the code by which the author himself lives, but a moral without any immediate practical purpose, left to the deduction of the things as they are for their own sake—in a word the ethical method of Shakespeare. This is Mr. Galsworthy's theory of the drama, and sometimes he comes but little short of his theory."

( 24 )

**Marriot on Galsworthy's Wit :**

"He had every opportunity to show his wit, to make brilliant Wilde-like epigrams or Shavian paradoxes, to exhibit his own virtuosity ; but he sank his own personality completely in the theme, and allowed the play to speak for itself. He might have made his characters declaim about the injustice of the law, but except for the final speech of James, they remain almost inarticulate. Whatever message the play has for the audience is to be inferred from the actions and circumstances of the characters."

( 25 )

**A. C. Ward on Impartial Presentation of Problems :**

"Did Galsworthy write 'in cold blood, with his nerves at rest, and his brain and senses normal,' showing in a detached manner 'that



which is there, both fair and foul, no more, no less' ? Certainly he tried to give an impartial presentation of his problems. If he did not succeed, it was because of some personal factor he could not control."

( 26 )

#### **Coats on Galsworthy's Impartiality :**

"A third characteristic of Galsworthy, the dramatist, is his impartiality ..... In this respect this author is usually successful, no doubt, because of his training as a barrister. Galsworthy knows that 'there are two sides to every coin, as one of his characters puts it.....Even where Galsworthy's own sympathies are obvious, he is scrupulously careful to put the case for the other side so fairly that his own advocates will recognize it as a true exposition of their views."

( 27 )

#### **Harold Williams on Social Problems in Galsworthy's Plays :**

"The purely human problems of life, love, hate, the passionate impulses, mother-love, madness and world-weariness with the inscrutable ways of the gods, these great themes, which have occupied dramatists of all ages, do not disturb the mind of Mr. Galsworthy. His vision is narrowed to social problems."

( 28 )

#### **R. H. Mottram on the Scene of Everlasting Struggle :**

"To the end Galsworthy's work remains the scene of the everlasting struggle, divorce, disillusionment, defeat, even against tenacity, integrity, and finally, something a little beyond and above both, in the future."

(29)

#### **Fred. B. Millett on many points of View of a Problem :**

"Even more conspicuously than his novels, Galsworthy's plays illustrate his desire to state as many points of view of the central problem as possible, a desire which leads him to group persons with distinct points of view symmetrically around the central theme. The best of Galsworthy's work is the earliest when he was most realistic and least doctrinaire. In the later plays, the form is sometimes so loose as to seem flabby, and his characterization frequently has the abstractness and the unlikeliness of the allegorical figure of the morality plays. But despite their deficiencies, a few of Galsworthy's plays seem likely to have a fairly prolonged existence in theatrical revivals.

(30)

#### **Cazamian on his Notion of the Problem Drama :**

"This notion of the problem drama is the healthiest : John Galsworthy claims not to follow any other and he has most often



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succeeded in keeping to it. The picture which he has drawn of the conflicts of forces or feelings, from which a susceptible conscience will realize the complex nature of duty, preserve a truly objective spirit ; they stimulate reflection rather than they teach a doctrine. His apprenticeship to law stands him in good stead here, and he presents the pros and cons of a case forcefully and clearly."

(31)

**Skemp on Imagination and Sympathy in Galsworthy's Problem Plays :**

"The tendency to probe the sores of society characterizes serious modern drama in general, but Mr. Galsworthy's diagnosis and his suggested treatment are his own.....Mr. Galsworthy also handles definite problems, those of marriage, of sex relationship, of labour disputes, of the administration of the law of solitary confinement, but for him the individual problem leads always to the fundamental one of the general relations between individuals within the social organism. He faces it with deep consciousness of its infinite complexity, he feels this evil in things as they are, but never ascribes them to this class, or that, to this or that, simple cause. He suggests no 'practical' reform, though reforming purpose appears in his constant indication of existing wrongs. His solution is not political but ethical. The source of all evil, for him, lies in failure of imagination and sympathy. So through all Mr. Galsworthy's work it is in lack of sympathy and imagination that he finds the springs of evil. Without imagination true sympathy is impossible, and pity is a poor substitute. Without imagination good intentions can bear little fruit ; and so for Mr. Galsworthy no phrase expresses and suggests as 'I can't imagine'."

(32)

**Harold Williams on Ibsen and Galsworthy : A Comparison**

"He is an interpreter of Anglo-Saxon modernity, denouncing our evil ways, especially our reprehensible class distinctions and the selfish welfare between labour and capital. And like Ibsen, Mr. Galsworthy is impartial, detached, analytical ; like Ibsen he has been accused of pessimism because he sees the sorrow of life as well as its joy ; but he is even more cold and judicial than Ibsen ; his humour is meagre, and he is without Ibsen's flavour and poetic genius."

(33)

**Marriot on Conflict in Galsworthy's Drama :**

"The victim is in conflict with 'fate' in the form of a 'system'. There is always conflict in Galsworthy's drama and there is always an undercurrent of irony which is more impressive than open denunciation. The characters are unable to express their sense of wrong, but their very inarticulateness is moving. The story told without ornament of excrecence, with its stark realism and convincing exactness might justify its own forecast, that it cannot help con-



trasting these methods with those of Mr. Bernard Shaw, whose characters are all articulate to the point of volubility. There is no need to guess their emotions ; they expound them with wonderful lucidity. But it often happens that an incoherent ejaculation or clumsy gesture is more eloquent than a fine speech because it hints at the unplumbed depths of agony suffered by the dumb animal of the human race."

( 34 )

### Coats on Contemporary Life in Galsworthy's Plays (Realism) :

"Galsworthy in his plays aims almost exclusively at the representation of contemporary life, in its familiar everyday aspects. He does not, like Shaw take us 'back to Methuselah' in the remote past, or 'as far as thought can reach' into the distant future. Neither does he, like Barrie, transport his audience to a magic wood where people are given a second chance of life, or to some enchanted island on the coast of Scotland where persons mysteriously disappear. To Galsworthy such romantic flights are quite unnecessary ; the humdrum world around us, with all its welter of conflicting forces, provides, just as it is, quite sufficient dramatic material for artist's purpose."

( 35 )

### Skemp on Galsworthy's Characterization :

"The persons of his dramas serve chiefly to express tendencies and though they are differentiated carefully, conceived clearly and drawn consistently, they often remain typical rather than individual. The admirable naturalness of Mr. Galsworthy's dialogue helps to cover this; and when he cares to elaborate character, as in *The Pigeon* and in his novels, his work is excellent. But even at the best, his view of character, of emotion, and motive is intense rather than wide. This appears in repetition.....where character is thus conceived, we shall scarcely expect to find development of character under the stress of circumstances ; and here we come to the chief dramatic weakness of the plays. For a satisfying dramatic effect definite progress is needed alike in character and action."

( 36 )

### J. L. Roy on Characterization :

"In his plays and novels one finds that there are types of character contrasted—the champions of established order versus the champions of reform and freedom. In 'The Forsyte Saga' one finds Soames Forsyte as the champion of Victorianism, and Irene Forsyte the champion of modernism. The figure of Irene is, perhaps, Mr. Galsworthy's best creation."

( 37 )

### Marriot on Galsworthy's Characters :

"This is not to say that Galsworthy's characters are not convincingly real ; they are flesh and blood like ourselves ; but we are



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more interested in what they mean as social phenomena than in their personal qualities and idiosyncracies---In other words, Galsworthy's architectural instinct for symmetry and poise was just a trifle too strong. The artistic conscience which controlled his writing corresponds to the social conscience which controlled his daily life."

( 38 )

**Skemp on Plot and Character in Galsworthy's Plays :**

"Mr. Galsworthy is a good Aristotelian in the relative importance which he attaches to incident and to character. 'Dramatic action', says the shrewdest of all theorists of drama, 'is not with a view to the representation of character. Character comes in as subsidiary to the action. It is true that Mr. Galsworthy is content with a dramatic action which lacks the ordered dynamic quality demanded by Aristotle, but even when the action does not move towards a definite climax, the emphasis still rests on the incidents. Except in *The Pigeon*, Mr. Galsworthy seldom lingers over the exhibition of character for its own interest ; that is the greatest mark of distinction between his plays and his novels."

( 39 )

**Harold Williams on Galsworthy vs. Shaw :**

"But unlike Mr. Shaw he makes no bid for popularity. Mr. Shaw must bask himself in the sunshine of applause or the atmosphere of execration ; Mr. Galsworthy can pursue his own path. For the good of his public Mr. Shaw has been more thoughtful ; for the good of his soul Mr. Galsworthy has chosen the more excellent way. The satirist, unless he raised a laugh, never yet cleared away from the heart of society the accretions of evil custom and easy acquiescence.

( 40 )

**Harold Williams on Galsworthy's Dramatic Art :**

"Mr. Galsworthy's significance lies in his sincerity. He is painfully aware of the many evils done under the sun : and he comes as a reformer and philanthropist. But he is wanting in a stronger faith ; the burning hope which has animated greater reformers is not his, his world is uniformly grey. None of his plays is hopeful ; and the dramatic end of *Justice*, ending in utter desolation and misery is characteristic of his thought and attitude. But uninspiring, and in one sense uninspired as is Mr. Galsworthy's drama, it is strong, realistic and above all has no taint of the theatre. No faintest suspicion of stagey effect clings to a single one of his plays. They are to use his own epithet "photographic dramas".

( 41 )

**Miss Storm Jameson on Galsworthy, the Faithful Interpreter of Life :**

"Galsworthy does not create life ; yet he has interpreted today. He is not original, he is not inspired but thoughtful ; not imaginative, but truthful."



( 42 )

**J.L. Roy on Galsworthy's Place in British Drama :**

"His place in British drama is well secured, because he is one of the very few serious dramatists who enjoy a nationwide popularity. As M. Andre Chevrillon in his brilliant essay on John Galsworthy says.....'the serious drama is a comment on life.....a universal struggle is summed up in a fight between two men, the tragedy of *Romeo and Juliet* strikes chords in every lover, in every age. Hamlet is a very man. Shavian paradoxes may be absent, and Maugham-like penetration of personality may be wanting, but his characters are uncannily real without being actually alive.' The name of Mr. John Galsworthy will endure in future for a great and rare contribution—the picture of social life in the upper middle classes of England during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries."

( 43 )

**J. Reisly on his Plays as a Picture of Post-war England :**

"Galsworthy was an honest mind, a careful workman, and a sincere humanitarian whose admirers believe that his novels and plays are important social documents to which a later generation will turn for a picture of post-war England."

( 44 )

**Marriot's Influences on Galsworthy :**

"He learned his craftsmanship from the French and Russian realists, and the influence of Flaubert, De Maupassant, Dostoevski and Chekhov, penetrated into his plays. He admired and imitated their close observation of details, their economy of words, their detachment. The characters in his plays are so faithfully reproduced that they seem uncannily real without being actually alive."

( 45 )

**Hermon Ould on Galsworthy as a Lover of Beauty :**

"Galsworthy thirsted after beauty as the saint after righteousness. He had no sympathy with the recent cult of ugliness..... He was fully aware of the relativity of beauty.....; but Beauty, however, indefinable, yields at least temporary ecstasy to those who seek her, even though she holds her pursuer at a distance and always eludes capture."

( 46 )

**Harold Williams on the Morality of Galsworthy's Drama :**

"There is no bias in the moral Mr. Galsworthy sets rolling for he is faithful to the ethical character of the drama of modern life outspread before him.....The morality of Mr. Galsworthy's drama is concerned not with immediately practical result."



( 47 )

**J. Reisly on Galsworthy compared with Shaw and Barrie :**

"Shaw's gifts are more brilliant than Galsworthy's and though he can be more dull his great moments like his character cling to the memory as Galsworthy's fail to do .....Primarily, Galsworthy is a preacher exposing the social abuses of his day and place ; Shaw, a propagandist, harbouring opinions on social, economic and moral questions, and the zealous urge to proclaim them at all costs ; Barrie is the born artist, the stuff of whose greatest plays is ideas and whose abiding concern is to express them with power, convincingness and beauty. The earmark of Galsworthy's plays is high seriousness, of Shaw's wit (laughter of the head) or, Barrie's humour (laughter of the heart) and imagination, both full of whims and surprises. There is some beauty in Galsworthy's plays, endless beauty in Barrie's ; as to Shaw, Professor Weyganet laments, 'there is so damnably much of Shaw and no beauty at all', Galsworthy had everything, a carefully cultivated talent could have given him ; Shaw fits perfectly Lowell's picture of Preas : one-fourth of his genius and three-fourths sheer fudge : it is Barrie alone who shows his divine right to be accounted in the great tradition."

( 48 )

**Harold Williams on Galsworthy's Dialogue :**

"His dialogue is the speech of men who are living beings facing the exigencies of the moment in an ordinary world. There is no artifice in the conversation of his characters. Nevertheless his dialogue is not merely a mechanical record of things said in the real world..... Mr. Galsworthy's dialogue is the most plain and unadorned, matter of fact, but he understands the two arts of omission and arrangement, and in consequence, his plays have a directness and economy in method unequalled by any living English writer."

( 49 )

**Marriot on His novels as a Picture of Contemporary Social life :**

"In his novels, however, where he has no particular thesis to expound, and where he is trying to transcribe his impressions of the people he has known, he is often more truly creative. Old Jolyon, Soames Forsyte, Fleur and John were understood from within, not simply observed from without. But into a carefully made play they would probably have refused to 'stay out'. They would have defied the dramatists' orders as heartily as 'old English' broke the orders of his doctor.

The trilogy of novels which make *The Forsyte Saga*, and the three later novels included in a *Modern Comedy* should be interesting a thousand years hence as a picture of social life in the upper middle classes of England during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries."



( 50 )

**Edward Garnett on Galsworthy's People :**

"His lower-class people are shown to us through the class-conscious eyes of the gentleman, who strive as he might could never forget the double-wall of class difference, one of which was kept up by the poor to keep out the rich."

( 51 )

**Fred. B. Millett on Galsworthy's Naturalism :**

"Technically, his plays show an advance in naturalism over those of Pinero and Jones, though his naturalism, as we should expect, is not of the sordid or brutal variety. But naturalism is evident in the plasticity of his dramatic form, the tendency to break up the action into a number of desperate scenes, the studied colloquialism of his dialogue and the attempt to convey his message without the use of an inorganic *Raisonneur*."

( 52 )

**Skemp on the actual in Galsworthy's Plots :**

"In all these plots, there is not a single incident foreign to common experience. Mr. Galsworthy is wedded to the actual..... Whether Mr. Shaw is handling contemporary matters or a story more remote he selects and emphasizes the abnormal—the bizarre, or at least the unorthodox in character or circumstance. Mr. Galsworthy is content with the dramatic possibilities of the commonplace. More, his determined sincerity refuses the obvious legitimate method of heightening the interest of a commonplace story—Ibsen's method of packing the apparently commonplace with great psychological significance.....In choice of material and conception, then Mr. Galsworthy is above all faithful to life as he sees it, but this very intentness of the exact fact carries with it limitations."

( 53 )

**Coats on Galsworthy's Place :**

"In the drama of today Galsworthy occupies an important and distinctive place. He has his affinities, it is true, with other playwrights of the past and of the present. His naturalism is akin to that of Ibsen ; he shares the moral earnestness of Shaw; in his preoccupation with the sores and diseases of society he resembles Brieux. Yet the essential qualities of his are not borrowed when we see his plays upon the stage, or read them in the quietness of the study, we are impressed by a psychological insight, a social passion, an artistic economy and restraint which are manifestly the author's own."

( 54 )

**Cazamian on Galsworthy as a Dramatist :**

"The theatre of John Galsworthy is not a compromise, it is a supple and fine adaptation of the philosophical type to the concrete



necessities of the stage. Each play is built on a frame of ideas ; but these are not put in from the outside ; such situations are selected at will, through their spontaneous development suggests to our minds the terms between which an abstract relation may be established."

( 55 )

### Coats on Irony in Galsworthy's Plays :

"Once more, there is in the plays of Galsworthy a prevailing irony. He constantly reminds us that, even after the spirit of fairness and impartiality has been exercised to the utmost, there is a disconcerting twist in things which cannot be wholly accounted for or eliminated."

( 56 )

### Skemp on Galsworthy's Naturalism :

"Mr. Galsworthy's characteristics in choice of material and in conception may then be summarised. Concentration on the graver common aspects of contemporary life, strong emphasis on incidents as the outcome of forces stronger than the individual, and austere fidelity to actual fact. His naturalism, however, never betrays him into working merely photographically, indiscriminately reproducing what he sees. On the contrary, his invention or selection of subordinate incident is infinitely careful, nothing is admitted that does not advance the main scheme."

( 57 )

### Harold Williams on Galsworthy's Characters :

"And further, there can be no mistaking his characters. They not only live, they are so clearly defined in dialogue and action that hardly any room is left to the actor for personal interpretation. His writing claims no ornaments and graces ; but in simplicity and directness few modern plays lose less in the reading and gain less in the acting even in these days when the producer, not the author, is the presiding genius of drama.....Mr. Galsworthy transfers his people from the office, the home, the street to the stage, modifying nothing save to compress and arrange, in order clearly to direct the attention of his audience to that question of the day which is the business of the play."

( 58 )

### Skemp on Galsworthy's Dramatic Craftsmanship :

"In matters of stagecraft as in literary qualities, Mr. Galsworthy's plays are characterised by unforced naturalism, and reverse of emphasis. He introduces new personages unostentatiously ; there is no formal entry—the nearest approach is in the slightly prepared entrance. His crowd and group effects are admirable...Similarly,



naturalism and strict relevance are the chief characteristics of his dialogue. Every word bears on the action, or reveals character, or suggests the attitude which Mr. Galsworthy desires in the spectators. Occasionally he allows tricks of phrase with something of label effect—a parallel to his tendency towards typical character."

( 59 )

### Cazamian on Galsworthy's Style :

"His style, eminently flexible, is readily adapted to very diverse functions ; quivering, nervous, coloured in descriptions, vigorous and suggestive in the rendering of states of consciousness, it lends itself to widely different tones, and becomes in the language of every person the indispensable instrument of the very thought to which we are listening. Impassioned as it is, it can use irony with superior success."

( 60 )

### Harold Williams on Galsworthy as a Satirist :

"Mr. Galsworthy hardly makes us laugh, not only because he is wanting in humour, but because he is always a little strident and harsh. Unless he is writing with acerbity he becomes profitless and weak. The first inclination of Mr. Galsworthy's talent is towards satire. He adopted fiction by which to express himself because it was the mode of the day ; in the eighteenth century he would have written satirical poems, in iambic couplets. When he passed from fiction to drama he felt more painfully the want of poetry in his method. Cold, involved and psychological satire can have no place on the stage, for no actor can represent it, no audience fixes its attention upon its abstractions. Mr. Galsworthy was driven therefore to converting satirical fiction into the impartial analysis of the drama with a purpose.

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### Skemp on Galsworthy's Stage Directions :

"Mr. Galsworthy's fine economy and concentration of effects reveals itself in his stage directions. In his novels he shows himself particularly alert to sense effects. He feels character in externals ; not in bodily characteristics only, but in gesture, in clothes, in dogs, in furniture.....In the plays these suggestions necessarily pass into stage directions ; and Mr. Galsworthy's stage directions are admirable...Mr. Galsworthy, no doubt, bears the reader in mind as must a modern dramatist whose plays gain their provincial audience largely through book-form ; but we seldom find a word which is not weighty for the stage manager. Every touch is purposeful."









## JUSTICE

(Text and Paraphrase)

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### PERSONS IN THE PLAY

*James How*  
*Walter How*, his son } Solictiors.

*Robert Cokeson*, their mananging clerk.

*William Falder*, their junior clerk.

*Sweedle*, their office- boy.

*Cowley*, a cashier.

*Wister*, the detective of Scotland Yard.

*Mr. Justice Floyd*, a judge.

*Harold Cleaver*, and old advocate.

*Hector Fromp*, a young advocate.

*Captain Danson, V.C.*, a prison governor.

*The Rev. Hugh Miller*, a prison chaplain.

*Edward Clements*, a prison doctor.

*Wooder*, a chief warder.

*Moaney*  
*Clipton*  
*O' Cleary* } Convicts.

*Ruth Honeywill*, a woman.

*A number of Barristers, Solicitors, Spectators, Ushers, Reporters,*

*Jurymen, Warders and Prisoners.*

*Time* : about 1910.

*Place* : England.



## TEXT

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### ACT I

(The scene is the managing clerk's room, at the offices of *James And Walter How*, on a July morning. The room is old-fashioned, furnished with well-worn mahogany and leather, and lined with tin boxes and estate plans. It has three doors. Two of them are close together in the centre of a wall. One of these two doors leads to the outer office, which is only divided from the managing clerk's room by a partition of wood and clear glass ; and when the door into this outer office is opened there can be seen the wide outer door leading out on to the stone stairway of the building. The outer of these two centre doors leads to the junior clerk's room. The third door is that leading to the partners' room)

(The managing clerk, *Cokeson*, is sitting at his table adding up figures in a pass-book, and murmuring their numbers to himself. He is a man of sixty, wearing spectacles ; rather short, with a bald head, and an honest, pug-dog face. He is dressed in a well-worn black frock-coat and pepper-and-salt trousers.)

*Cokeson*. And five's twelve, and three—fifteen, nineteen, twenty-three, thirty-two, forty-one—and carry four. (He ticks the page, and goes on murmuring) Five, seven, twelve, seventeen, twenty-four and nine, thirty three, thirteen and carry one.

(He again makes a tick. The outer office door is opened, and *Sweedle*, the office-boy, appears closing the door behind him. He is a pale youth of sixteen, with spiky hair.

*Cokeson*. (With grumpy expectation) And carry one.

*Sweedle*. There's a party wants to see Falder, Mr. *Cokeson*.

*Cokeson*. Five, nine, sixteen, twenty-one, twentynine—and carry two, Send him to Morris's. What name ?

*Sweedle*. Honeywill.

*Cokeson*. What's his business ?

*Sweedle*. It's a woman.

*Cokeson*. A lady ?

*Sweedle*. No, a person.

*Cokeson*. Ask her in. Take this pass-book to Mr. *James*.

(He closes the pass-book.



## PARAPHRASE

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### ACT I

[Office of James and Walter How, solicitors. It is a July morning. The scene is the room of the managing clerk, Mr. Cokeson. The room is old-fashioned, furnished with old mahogany and leather furniture. In a line can be seen a number of tin boxes and plans of the estate. There are three doors. Two of them are close together in the centre of the wall. One of these doors leads to the outer office, which is divided from the managing clerk's room by a wooden and glass partition. When the door of the outer office is opened it shows the wide outer door leading to the stone stairway of the building. The second of these centre doors leads to the junior clerk's room. The third door leads to the partners' room.]

[The managing clerk, Cokeson, is sitting at his table checking up entries in a pass-book, murmuring the numbers to himself. He is an old man of sixty, wearing spectacles. He is rather short, with a bald head and an honest-looking grim face. He is wearing an old short coat and grey-black and white trousers.]

*Cokeson.* (*Adding up.*) And five's twelve, three—fifteen, nineteen, twenty-three, thirty-two, forty-one—carry four.

(*He goes on adding up thus.*)

(The outer office door is opened, and Sweedle, the office-boy, enters. He is a thin young boy of sixteen, with short and stiff hair.)

*Cokeson.* (*With enquiring looks.*) And carry one.

*Sweedle.* There is somebody wanting to see Falder.

*Cokeson.* (*He goes on adding.*) Five, nine, sixteen, twenty-one—Send him up to Morris. What is his name?

*Sweedle.* Heneywill, sir

*Cokeson.* Why has he come in the office?

*Sweedle.* Sir, she is a woman.

*Cokeson.* Is she a respectable woman?

*Sweedle.* No sir, she is only an ordinary woman.

*Cokeson.* Ask her in. Take this pass-book to Mr. James.

(*He gives him the pass-book.*)



*Sweedle (Reopening the door)* Will you come in please ?

*(Ruth Honeywill comes in. She is a tall woman, twenty-six years old, unpretentiously dressed, with black hair and eyes, and an ivory-white, clear-cut face. She stands very still, having a natural dignity of pose and gesture.)*

*(Sweedle goes out into the partners' room with the passbook.)*

*Cokeson. (Looking round at Ruth)* The young man's out. *(Suspiciously)* State your business, please.

*Ruth. (Who speaks in a matter-of-fact voice, and with a slight West-county accent)* It's a personal matter, sir.

*Cokeson.* We don't allow private callers here. Will you leave a message ?

*Ruth.* I'd rather see him, please.

*(She narrows her dark eyes and gives him a honeyed look.)*

*Cokeson. (Expanding)* It's all against the rules. Suppose I had my friends here to see me ! It'd never do !

*Ruth.* No, sir.

*Cokeson. (A little taken aback)* Exactly ! And here you are wanting to see a junior clerk !

*Ruth.* Yes, sir ; I must see him.

*Cokeson. (Turning full round to her with a sort of outraged interest)* But this is a lawyer's office. Go to his private address.

*Ruth.* He's not there.

*Cokeson. (Uneasy)* Are you related to the party ?

*Ruth.* No, sir.

*Cokeson. (In real embarrassment)* I don't know what to say. It's no affair of the office.

*Ruth.* But what am I to do ?

*Cokeson.* Dear me ! I can't tell you that.

*(Sweedle comes back. He crosses to the outer office and passes through into it, with a quizzical look at Cokeson, carefully leaving the door an inch or two open.)*

*Cokeson. (Fortified by this look)* This won't do, you know, this won't do at all. Suppose one of the partners came in !

*(An incoherent knocking and chuckling is heard from the outer door of the outer office.)*

*Sweedle. (Putting his head in)* There's some children outside here.

*Ruth.* They're mine, please.

*Sweedle.* Shall I hold them in check ?

*Ruth.* They're quite small, sir.

*(She takes a step towards Cokeson.)*

*Cokeson.* You mustn't take up his time in office hours ; we're a clerk short as it is.



*Sweedle.* (*Reopening the door*) Will you come in, please ?  
 (*Ruth Honeywill comes in. She is a tall woman, twenty-six years old, unpretentiously dressed, with black hair and eyes, and an ivory-white clear-cut face. She stands very still having a natural dignity of pose and gesture.*)

(*Sweedle goes out into the partners' room with the pass-book.*)

*Cokeson.* (*To Ruth*) Falder is not here. What is your business please ?

*Ruth.* It is a personal business, sir.

*Cokeson.* We don't allow personal visitors here. You can, however, leave your message for him.

*Ruth.* I would prefer to see him personally.

*Cokeson.* It is against the rules of the office. Supposing everybody should receive his friends here. It will very much disturb the work of the office.

*Ruth.* Yes, sir.

*Cokeson.* Right ! And you are calling here to see Falder, the junior clerk.

*Ruth.* Yes, sir. I must see him because my business is most urgent.

*Cokeson.* But we are here in the office of a lawyer. If you have an urgent work with Falder, you should go to meet him at his residence.

*Ruth.* He is not at home.

*Cokeson.* Are you related to Falder ?

*Ruth.* No, sir.

*Cokeson.* I don't understand what reply I can give you. If is no part of our business here.

*Ruth.* But what can I do ?

*Cokeson.* My dear lady, I can't tell you anything in this connection.

(*Sweedle comes back. He passes through Cokeson's room to the outer office, looking at Cokeson with peering looks, and goes out leaving the door an inch or two open intentionally.*)

*Cokeson.* This is not possible. Supposing one of the partners came and saw you here, what will they think of us ?

(*A confused noise of laughing and knocking is heard from the outer office.*)

*Sweedle.* There are some children standing outside.

*Ruth.* They are my children.

*Sweedle.* Should I keep them in check ?

*Ruth.* They're quite small children, sir (*She takes a step towards*

*Cokeson.*)

*Cokeson.* You mustn't waste his time in the office. We are already short of a clerk in the office.



*Ruth.* It's a matter of life and death.

*Cokeson.* (*Again outraged*) Life and death !

*Sweedle.* Here is Falder.

(*Falder* has entered through the outer office. He is a pale, good-looking young man, with quick, rather scared eyes. He moves towards the door of the clerks' office, and stands there irresolute.

*Cokeson.* Well, I'll give you a minute. It's not regular. (Taking up a bundle of papers, he goes out into the partners' room.

*Ruth.* (*In a low, hurried voice*) He's on the drink again, Will. He tried to cut my throat last night. I came out with the children before he was awake. I went round to you—

*Falder.* I've changed my digs.

*Ruth.* Is it all ready for to-night ?

*Falder.* I've got the tickets. Meet me 11.45 at the booking office. For God's sake don't forget we're man and wife ! (*Looking at her with tragic intensity.*) *Ruth !*

*Ruth.* You're not afraid of going, are you ?

*Falder.* Have you got your things, and the children's ?

*Ruth.* Had to leave them, for fear of waking Honeywill, all but one bag. I can't go near home again.

*Falder.* (*Wincing*) All that money gone for nothing. How much *must* you have ?

*Ruth.* Six pounds—I could do with that, I think.

*Falder.* Don't give away where we're going. (*As if to himself*) When I get out there I mean to forget it all.

*Ruth.* If you're sorry, say so I'd sooner he killed me than take you against your will.

*Falder.* (*With a queer smile*) We've got to go. I don't care ; I'll have you.

*Ruth.* You've just to say ; it's not too late.

*Falder.* It is too late. Here's seven pounds. Booking office—11.45 to-night. If you weren't what you are to me, *Ruth*—!

*Ruth.* Kiss me !

(They cling together passionately, then fly apart just as *Cokeson* re-enters the room. *Ruth* turns and goes out through the outer office. *Cokeson* advances deliberately to his chair and seats himself.

*Cokeson.* This isn't right, *Falder*.

*Falder.* It shan't occur again, sir.

*Cokeson.* It's an improper use of these premises.



*Ruth.* It is a matter of life and death. I must see him.

*Cokeson.* A matter of life and death !

*Sweedle.* Falder has arrived, sir.

(Falder has entered from the outer office. He is a palefaced, good-looking young man with quick and frightened looks. He moves towards the clerk's office, and stands hesitatingly at the door.)

*Cokeson.* Well, I shall give you just one minute to talk to him, although it is against the rules and regulations of the office.

(Goes out.)

*Ruth.* (To Falder). He is again under the effect of liquor. He tried to murder me last night. I have come out with the children before he got up in the morning. I called at your house but you were not there.

*Falder.* I have changed my house.

*Ruth.* Are we ready to leave tonight ?

*Falder.* I have already purchased the tickets. You should meet me at 11.45 at the booking office. But please don't forget to give the impression that we are husband and wife.

*Ruth.* Are you you afraid of going with me ?

*Falder.* Have you arranged and brought all your belongings, including your children's ?

*Ruth.* I had to leave many things because I was afraid he might wake up. I can't go back again to bring my things.

*Falder.* All the money is wasted then. How much money do you require now ?

*Ruth.* Six pounds. I can manage with that.

*Falder.* Don't tell anybody where we are going. (To himself.) I would forget everything as soon as I leave this place.

*Ruth.* If you are afraid of going with me, tell me frankly. I would far prefer to die at the hands of my husband than go with you against your will.

*Falder.* We have to go now. I don't care what may happen but I must have you.

*Ruth.* We are not yet late.

*Falder.* We are getting late. Here is seven pounds for you. Remember to meet at the booking office at 11.45 tonight. If you were not so dear, Ruth, as you are.....

*Ruth.* Give me a parting kiss.

(They cling together passionately, but jump apart as Cokeson enters. Ruth turns and goes out through the outer office. Cokeson goes over to Falder and sits on a chair in front of him.)

*Cokeson.* This is not proper, Mr. Falder.

*Falder.* Sir, this shall never be repeated.

*Cokeson.* You are misusing the office time and premises.



Falder. Yes, sir.

Cokeson. You quite understand—the party was in some distress ; and, having children with her, I allowed my feelings—*(He opens a drawer and produces from it a tract.)* Just take this ! “Purity in the Home.” It’s a well-written thing.

Falder. *(Taking it, with a peculiar expression)* Thank you, sir.

Cokeson. And look here, Falder, before Mr. Walter comes, have you finished up that cataloguing Davis had in hand before he left ?

Falder. I shall have done with it to-morrow, sir—for good.

Cokeson. It’s over a week since Davis went. Now it won’t do, Falder. You’re neglecting your work for private life. I shan’t mention about the party having called, but—

Falder. *(Passing into his room)* Thank you, sir.

*(Cokeson stares at the door through which Falder has gone out; then shakes his head, and is just settling down to write, when Walter How comes in through the outer office. He is a rather refined-looking man of thirty-five, with a pleasant, almost apologetic voice.)*

Walter. Good-morning, Cokeson.

Cokeson. Morning, Mr. Walter.

Walter. My father here ?

Cokeson. *(Always with a certain patronage as to a young man who might be doing better)* Mr. James has been here since eleven o’clock.

Walter. I’ve been in to see the pictures, at the Guild-hall.

Cokeson. *(Looking at him as though this were exactly what was to be expected)* Have you now—ye-es. This lease of Boulter’s—am I to send it to counsel ?

Walter. What does my father say ?

Cokeson. ‘Aven’t bothered him.

Walter. Well, we can’t be too careful.

Cokeson. It’s such a little thing—hardly worth the fees. I thought you’d do it yourself.

Walter. Send it, please. I don’t want the responsibility.

Cokeson. *(With an indescribable air of compassion)* Just as you like. This “right of way” case—we’ve got ‘em on the deeds.

Walter. I know ; but the intention was obviously to exclude that bit of common ground.

Cokeson. We needn’t worry about that. We’re the right side of the law.

Walter. I don’t like it.



*Falder.* I am sorry, sir.

*Cokeson.* You know the lady was in some difficulty. She had her children with her. I allowed her to meet you because I took pity on her. (Offering him a book.) Here it is for you. It is a very fine book, "Purity in the Home".

*Falder.* Thank you, sir.

*Cokeson.* Look here Falder, you must finish your catalogue that was given to you before Davis comes.

*Falder.* I shall finish it tomorrow, sir.

*Cokeson.* It is more than a week since Davis left. You are neglecting your work. This is bad. You are taking more interest in your personal affairs. I shall not speak about your meeting this lady to Mr. James but it should not be repeated.

*Falder.* Thank you, sir.

(Cokeson keeps looking towards the door through which Falder has gone out. Then he shakes his head meaningfully, and takes up his pen to write. At this moment Walter How enters through the outer office. He is a polished man of thirty-five, with a pleasant and soft voice.

*Walter.* Good morning, Cokeson.

*Cokeson.* Good-morning, Mr. Walter.

*Walter.* Has my father arrived ?

*Cokeson.* Yes sir, he came here at 11 o'clock.

*Walter.* I saw a film at the Guildhall.

*Cokeson.* Well, what do you say about this lease of Boulter ? Should I send it to the counsel for opinion ?

*Walter.* What is the opinion of father ?

*Cokeson.* I have not troubled him about it.

*Walter.* Well, we may proceed wrongly.

*Cokeson.* It is a very small case. It is not worth our taking up. I thought you would manage it yourself.

*Walter.* Please send it to father. I cannot take the responsibility.

*Cokeson.* As you please. This other case, this 'right-of-way' case ; we have already taken up.

*Walter.* I know ; but the intention was to leave out that plot of the land for public path.

*Cokeson.* We should not worry about that. The law is in our favour.

*Walter.* I don't like this approach.



*Cokeson. (With an indulgent smile)* We shan't want to set ourselves up against the law. Your father wouldn't waste his time doing that.

*(As he speaks, James How comes in from the partners' room. He is a shortish man, with white side-whiskers, plentiful grey hair, shrewd eyes, and gold pince-nez.*

*James.* Morning, Walter.

*Walter.* How are you, father ?

*Cokeson. (Looking down his nose at the papers in his hand as though deprecating their size)* I'll just take Boulter's lease in to young Falder to draft the instructions.

*(He goes into Falder's room.*

*Walter.* About that right-of-way case ?

*James.* Oh, well, we must go forward there. I thought you told me yesterday the firm's balance was over four hundred.

*Walter.* So it is.

*James. (Holding out the pass-book to his son)* Three—five—one, no recent cheques. Just get me out the cheque book.

*(Walter goes to a cupboard, unlocks a drawer, and produces a cheque book.*

*James.* Tick the pounds in the counterfoils. Five, fiftyfour, seven, five, twenty-eight, twenty, ninety, eleven, fifty-two, seventy one. Tally ?

*Walter. (Nodding)* Can't understand. Made sure it was over four hundred.

*James.* Give me the cheque-book. *(He takes the cheque book and cons the counterfoils)* What's this ninety ?

*Walter.* Who drew it ?

*James.* You.

*Walter. (Taking the cheque-book)* July 7th ? That's the day I went down to look over the Trenton Estate—last Friday week ; I came back on the Tuesday, you remember. But look here, father, it was *nine* I drew a cheque for. Five guineas to Smithers and my expenses. It just covered all but half a crown.

*James. (Gravely)* Let's look at that ninety cheque. *(He sorts the cheque out from the bundle in the pocket of the passbook).* Seems all right. There's no nine here. This is bad. Who cashed that nine-pound cheque ?

*Walter. (Puzzled and pained)* Let's see ! I was finishing Mrs. Reddy's will—only just had time ; yes—I gave it to Cokeson.

*James.* Look at that *ty* : that yours ?

*Walter. (After consideration)* My's curl back a little ; this doesn't.



*Cokeson.* We can't go against the law. Your father would never waste his time in acting against law.

(As he speaks James How enters from the partners' room. He is a short-statured man, with white side-whiskers, grey hair, sharp eyes, and golden spectacles.

*James.* Good-morning, Walter.

*Walter.* How do you do father ?

*Cokeson.* I am just giving Boulter's papers to Falder to draft the case. (*Going.*)

*Walter.* Do you refer to that 'right-of-way' case ?

*James.* Well, we shall look to that. You remember you said yesterday that our balance is over four hundred pounds.

*Walter.* Yes, it is.

*James.* Let me see the cheque-book.

*(James and Walter compare the cheques in the book.)*

*Walter.* I can't understand this, I am sure the balance was four hundred pounds.

*James.* When did you draw this cheque for ninety pounds ?

*Walter.* In whose name the cheque is drawn ?

*James.* It is in your name.

*Walter.* It is dated July 7. It is the day when I went to the Trenton Estate. It was Friday of the last week. I returned on Tuesday. But look here father, I drew the cheque just for nine pounds. I needed five pounds for the Smithers and the rest of the money for my expenses. The whole money was spent except half a crown.

*James.* Look at your figure of 90. This seems all natural. There is no figure of nine. Well who cashed that nine-pound cheque ?

*Walter.* Let me remember. I was finishing Mr. Reddy's Will and therefore I had no time. I gave the cheque to Cokeson.

*James.* Look at the letters 'ty'. Are they yours ?

*Walter.* My y's always have a curb backwards. This is not like mine.



*James.* (*As Cokeson re-enters from Falder's room*) We must ask him. Just come here and carry your mind back a bit, Cokeson. D'you remember cashing a cheque for Mr. Walter Last Friday week—the day he went to Trenton ?

*Cokeson..* Ye-es. Nine pounds.

*James.* Look at this.

(*Handing him the cheque.*)

*Cokeson.* No ! Nine pounds. My lunch was just coming in ; and of course I like it hot ; I gave the cheque to Davis to run round to the bank. He brought it back, all notes—you remember. Mr. Walter, you wanted some silver to pay your cab. (*With a certain contemptuous comparison.*) Here, let me see. You've got the wrong cheque.

(*He takes cheque-book and pass-book from Walter.*)

*Walter.* Afraid not.

*Cokeson.* (*Having seen for himself*) It's funny.

*James.* You gave it to Davis, and Davis sailed for Australia on Monday. Looks black, Cokeson.

*Cokeson.* (*puzzled and upset*) Why this'd be a felony ! No, no ! there's some mistake.

*James.* I hope so.

*Cokeson.* There's never been anything of that sort in the office the twenty-nine years I've been here.

*James.* (*Looking at cheque and counterfoil*) This is a very clever bit of work ; a warning to you not to leave space after your figures, Walter.

*Walter.* (*Vexed*) Yes, I know—I was in such a tearing hurry that afternoon.

*Cokeson.* (*Suddenly*) This has upset me.

*James.* The counterfoil altered too—very deliberate piece of swindling. What was Davis's ship ?

*Walter.* City of Rangoon.

*James.* We ought to wire and have him arrested at Naples ; he can't be there yet.

*Cokeson.* His poor young wife. I like the young man. Dear, oh dear ! In this office !

*Walter.* Shall I go to the bank and ask the cashier ?

*James.* (*Grimly*) Bring him round here. And ring up Scotland Yard.

*Walter.* Really ?

(*He goes out through the outer office. James paces the room. He stops and looks at Cokeson, who is disconsolately rubbing the knees of his trousers.*)



*James.* We must ask Cokeson. Cokeson, do you remember cashing this cheque that Walter gave you last Friday when he went to Trenton.

*Cokeson.* Yes, it was for nine pounds. I was just going to take my lunch, and because I like to take my lunch hot, I gave the cheque to Davis for cashing it. He brought it back. Walter would remember that he brought all notes. Walter wanted some silver coins to give to the taxi driver. Let me see the cheque. Perhaps you have got the wrong cheque.

*Walter.* I am afraid the cheque is right.

*Cokeson.* It is very strange.

*James.* You gave the cheque to Davis and Davis has already sailed for Australia. There is some foul play in the matter.

*Cokeson.* Why, it would be a clear case of forgery. I feel there is some mistake.

*James.* Let us hope so.

*Cokeson.* There has never been such a case in this office during my twenty-nine years of service.

*James.* This is a very serious and clever sort of forgery. It is a warning to Walter not to leave any space after the figures in the cheque.

*Walter.* I was in extreme hurry that day.

*Cokeson.* This is extremely confusing.

*James.* The counter-foil of the cheque has also been altered accordingly. It is a very clear and clever act of forgery. What was the name of the ship by which Davis sailed?

*Walter.* His ship was 'City of Rangoon'.

*James.* We must send telegraphic message to Naples for his arrest. He must not have reached there yet.

*Cokeson.* He had a poor young wife. I have a great fondness for him. But how could all this happen in this office?

*Walter.* Shall I go to the bank and enquire of the cashier?

*James.* Call the cashier here. And ring up the Scotland Yard to send a police detective.

*Walter.* Shall we really do so?

(He goes out through the outer office. He stops and looks at Cokeson, who in his great agitation is rubbing his knees.



*James.* Well, Cokeson ! There's something in character, isn't there ?

*Cokeson.* (*Looking at him over his spectacles*) I don't quite take you, sir.

*James.* Your story would sound d—d thin to anyone who didn't know you.

*Cokeson.* Ye-es ! (*He laughs. Then with sudden gravity*) I'm sorry for that young man. I feel it as if it was my own son, Mr. James.

*James.* A nasty business !

*Cokeson.* It unsettles you. All goes on regular, and then a thing like this happens. Shan't relish my lunch to-day.

*James.* As bad as that, Cokeson ?

*Cokeson.* It makes you think. (*Confidentially*) He must have had temptation.

*James.* Not so fast. We haven't convicted him yet.

*Cokeson.* I'd sooner have lost a month's salary than had this happen. (*He broods.*)

*James.* I hope that fellow will hurry up.

*Cokeson.* (*Keeping things pleasant for the cashier*) It isn't fifty yards, Mr. James. He won't be a minute.

*James.* The idea of dishonesty about this office—it hits me hard Cokeson. (*He goes towards the door of the partners' room.*)

*Sweedle.* (*Entering quietly, to Cokeson in a low voice*) She's popped up again, sir—something she forgot to say to Falder.

*Cokeson.* (*Roused from his abstraction*) Eh ? Impossible. Send her away !

*James.* What's that ?

*Cokeson.* Nothing, Mr. James. A private matter. Here I'll come myself. (*He goes into the outer office as James passes into the partners' room*). Now you really mustn't—we can't have anybody just now.

*Ruth.* Not for a minute, sir.

*Cokeson.* Reely ! Reely ! I can't have it. If you want him, without ; he'll be going out for his lunch directly.

*Ruth.* Yes, sir.

*Walter.* entering with the cashier, passes *Ruth* as she leaves outer office.

*Cokeson.* (*To the cashier, who resembles a sedentary dragon*) Good-morning. (*To Walter*) Your father's in there.

(*Walter crosses and goes into the partners' room*).

*Cokeson.* It's nahsty, unpleasant little matter, Mr. Cowley. I'm quite ashamed to have to trouble you.



James. Well, Cokeson, there was indeed something odd in the character of Davis.

Cokeson. I don't quite agree with you, sir.

James. Your statement would appear very suspicious to those who did not know you.

Cokeson. But I am very sorry for Davis. I almost feel as if he were my own son.

James. He has played a great mischief.

Cokeson. It must vex you much, sir. Everything was going on smoothly and regularly when all of a sudden such a thing happened and disturbed us all. I shall not be able to relish my lunch today.

James. Have you taken it so seriously, Mr. Cokeson?

Cokeson. It makes us think. (*confidentially*) Davis must have had some temptation to commit this forgery.

James. We should not blame him without proper enquiries. We have not yet established any charge against him.

Cokeson. I would have preferred to lose a month's salary to letting such an act happen.

James. I hope the cashier should be coming immediately.

Cokeson. The bank is hardly fifty yards from here. He should be reaching here in a minute.

James. I feel extremely grieved to think that the idea of dishonesty crept into the mind of a person working in this office.

Sweedle. (*To Cokeson.*) Ruth Honeywill has come again, sir. She says that she forgot to tell something important to Falder.

Cokeson. It is impossible to allow her again. Ask her to go away.

James. What is the matter?

Cokeson. Nothing important; it was only a private matter. I am going out for a minute myself. (*To Ruth outside the office*) You should not have come again. We can't permit private visitors to call on us at this hour.

Ruth. Could you not allow just one minute, sir.

Cokeson. No, no, really no. I can't allow. If you want to meet him, wait for a while; he will shortly be going out for lunch. You can meet him then outside the office.

Ruth. Very well, sir.

(*Walter, entering with the cashier passes Ruth as she leaves the outer office.*)

Cokeson. (*To the cashier, who resembles a sedentary dragoon*) Good-morning. (*To Walter*) Your father's in there.

(*Walter crosses and goes into the partners' room.*)

Cokeson. It is a very nasty and unpleasant matter. Mr. Cowley, I am sorry to have given you this trouble.



Cowley. I remembered the cheque quite well. (*As if it were a liver*) Seemed in perfect order.

Cokeson. Sit down, won't you ? I'm not a sensitive man, but a thing like this about the place—it's not nice. I like people to be open and jolly together.

Cowley. Quite so.

Cokeson. (*Button-holing him and glancing towards the partners' room,* Of course he's a young man. I've told him about it before now—leaving space after his figures, but he *will* do it.

Cowley. I should remember the person's face—quite a youth.

Cokeson. I don't think we shall be able to show him to you, as a matter of fact.

(*James and Walter have come back from the partners' room.*

James. Good-morning, Mr. Cowley. You've seen my son and myself, you've seen Mr. Cokeson, and you've seen Sweedle, my office-boy. It was none of us, I take it.

(*The cashier shakes his head with a smile.*)

James. Be so good as to sit here. Cokeson, engage Mr. Cowley in conversation, will you ?

(*He goes towards Falder's room.*

Cokeson. Just a word, Mr. James.

James. Well ?

Cokeson. You don't want to upset the young man in there, do you ? He's a nervous young feller.

James. This must be thoroughly cleared up. Cokeson, for the sake of Falder's name, to say nothing of yours.

Cokeson. (*With some dignity*) That'll look after itself, sir. He's been upset once this morning ; I don't want him startled again.

James. It's a matter of form ; but I can't stand upon niceness over a thing like this—too serious. Just talk to Mr. Cowley.

(*He opens the door of Falder's room.*

James. Bring in the papers in Boulter's lease, will you, Falder ?

Cokeson. (*Bursting into voice*) Do you keep dogs ?

(*The cashier, with his eyes fixed on the door, does not answer.*)

Cokeson. You haven't such a thing as a bulldog pup you could spare me, I suppose ?

(*At the look on the cashier's face his jaw drops, and he turns to see Falder standing in the doorway, with his eyes fixed on Cowley, like the eyes of a rabbit fastened on a snake.*)

Falder. (*Advancing with the papers*) Here they are, sir.

James. (*Taking them*) Thank you.

Falder. Do you want me, sir ?

James. No, thanks !



*Cowley.* I very well remember the cheque. It was perfectly regular and normal.

*Cokeson.* Sit down please. I am not very sentimental about little things, but I am deeply pained to find that such an act of dishonesty happened in this office. It is not good. I wish my people to have good and cordial relations between themselves.

*Cowley.* You are quite right, sir.

*Cokeson.* Walter is an inexperienced young man, I have often advised him not to leave any space after his figures in the cheque. But he has done so in spite of my advice.

*Cowley.* I can recollect the face of the person who cashed the cheque. He was a young man.

*Cokeson.* I don't think we shall be able to show you the person concerned.

*(James and Water enter.)*

*James.* Good-morning, Mr. Cowley. You know me, my son Mr. Cokeson and our office boy Sweedle. I think it was none of us who cashed the cheque.

*(The Cashier shakes his head with a smile.)*

*James. (To Cokeson.)* Kindly keep Mr. Cowley busy in conversation.

*(James goes towards Falder's room.)*

*Cokeson. (To James)* Just a word, Mr. James.

*James.* Yes?

*Cokeson.* I don't think you want to disturb Falder about this affair. He is a nervous type of young man.

*James.* We must make thorough inquiries, Mr. Cokeson. It is in the interest of Falder also, not to speak of your interest.

*Cokeson.* Leave this to Falder himself. He has been much disturbed already this morning. I don't wish that he may be disturbed more.

*James.* It is a matter of procedure. I can't be very sentimental about these things. It is a very serious matter. Please keep Mr. Cowley busy.

*(James goes to Falder's room.)*

*James.* Bring in the papers of Boulter's case, Mr. Falder.

*Cokeson. (To Cowley)* Do you keep dogs, Mr. Cowley? I don't think you keep a bull-dog?

*(Looking at the cashier's face his jaw drops, and he turns to see Falder standing in the doorway. Falder's eyes are fixed on Cowley, like the eyes of a rabbit fixed on a snake.)*

*Falder. (Coming forward with the papers.)* Here are the papers, sir.

*James.* Thank you.

*Falder.* Anything more, sir?

*James.* No, thanks.



(*Falder* turns and goes back into his own room. As he shuts the door *James* gives the cashier an interrogative look, and the cashier nods.

*James*. Sure ? This isn't as we suspected.

*Cowley*. Quite. He knew me. I suppose he can't slip out of that room ?

*Cokeson*. (*Gloomily*) There's only the window—a whole floor and a basement.

(The door of *Falder's* room is quietly opened, and *Falder*, with his hat in his hand, moves towards the door of the outer office.

*James*. (*Quietly*) Where are you going, *Falder* ?

*Falder*. To have my lunch, sir.

*James*. Wait a few minutes, would you ? I want to speak to you about this lease.

*Falder*. Yes, sir.

(*He goes back into his room.*

*Cowley*. If I'm wanted, I can swear that's the young man who cashed the cheque. It was the last cheque I handled that morning before my lunch. These are the numbers of the notes he had. (*He puts a slip of paper on the table : then, brushing his hat round.*) Good-morning !

*James*. Good morning, Mr. *Cowley* !

*Cowley*. (*To Cokeson*) Good-morning.

*Cokeson*. (*With stupefaction*) Good-morning.

(The cashier goes out through the outer office. *Cokeson* sits down in his chair, as though it were the only place left in the morass of his feelings.

*Walter*. What are you going to do ?

*James*. Have him in. Give me the cheque and the counter-foil.

*Cokeson*. I don't understand. I thought young *Davis*—

*James*. We shall see.

*Walter*. One moment, father ; have you thought it out ?

*James*. Call him in !

*Cokeson*. (*Rising with difficulty and opening Falder's door ; hoarsely*) Step in here a minute. (*Falder comes in.*

*Falder*. (*Impassively*) Yes, sir ?

*James*. (*Turning to him suddenly with the cheque held out*) You know this cheque, *Falder* ?

*Falder*. No, sir.

*James*. Look at it. You cashed it last Friday week.

*Falder*. Oh ! yes, sir ; that one—*Davis* gave it me.

*James*. I know. And you gave *Davis* the cash ?

*Falder*. Yes, sir.



(Falder goes out. Mr. Cowley nods to Mr. James, suggesting that Falder was the man who cashed the cheque.

*James.* Are you sure, Mr. Cowley? We did not suspect him.

*Cowley.* I am quite sure. He knew me. I think he cannot escape from that room.

*Cokeson.* The room has only one window. He cannot escape. (The door of Falder's room is quietly opened, and Falder with his hat in his hand, comes out.

*James.* Where are you going, Falder?

*Falder.* To have my lunch, sir.

*James.* Please wait for a few minutes. I have to talk to you.

*Falder.* All right, sir.

*Cowley.* If I am needed, I can swear that he was the man who cashed the cheque. It was the last cheque I handled that morning before my lunch. I have brought the numbers of the notes that I gave him.

(The cashier goes out through the outer office. Cokeson sits down in his chair, as if this was the only place that could give him some comfort in the midst of his agitation.

*Walter.* What is to be done now?

*James.* Call him in. Let me have the cheque and counterfoil.

*Cokeson.* I did not expect this. I thought it was young Davis who played the mischief.

*Walter.* (To James.) A word to you, father. Have you considered all the pros and cons of the matter?

*James.* Call Falder here.

*Cokeson.* Will you come for a minute, Falder?

*Falder.* Yes, sir.

*James.* Do you remember this cheque, Falder?

*Falder.* No, sir.

*James.* Look at it carefully. You cashed it last Friday.

*Falder.* Yes, sir, I remember, I did encash it. Davis gave this cheque to me.

*James.* Yes, I understand. And did you give the cash to Davis.

*Falder.* Yes, sir.



*James.* When Davis gave you the cheque was it exactly like this ?

*Falder.* Yes, I think so, sir.

*James.* You know that Mr. Walter drew that cheque for *nine* pounds ?

*Falder.* No, sir—ninety.

*James.* Nine, Falder.

*Falder.* (*Faintly*) I don't understand, sir.

*James.* The suggestion, of course, is that the cheque was altered ; whether by you or Davis is the question.

*Falder.* I—I——.

*Cokeson.* Take your time, take your time.

*Falder.* (*Regaining the impassivity*) Not by me, sir.

*James.* The cheque was handed to Cokeson by Mr. Walter at one o'clock ; we know that because Mr. Cokeson's lunch had just arrived.

*Cokeson.* I couldn't leave it.

*James.* Exactly ; he therefore gave the cheque to Davis. It was cashed by you at 1.15. We know that because the cashier recollects it for the last cheque he handled before *his* lunch.

*Falder.* Yes, sir, Davis gave it to me because some friends were giving him a farewell luncheon.

*James.* (*Puzzled*) You accuse Davis, then ?

*Falder.* I don't know, sir—it's very funny.

(*Walter, who has come close to his father, says something to him in a low voice.*)

*James.* Davis was not here again after that Saturday, was he ?

*Cokeson.* (*Anxious to be of assistance to the young man, and seeing faint signs of their all being jolly once more*) No, he sailed on the Monday.

*James.* Was he, Falder ?

*Falder.* (*Very faintly*) No, sir.

*James.* Very well, then, how do you account for the fact that this nought was added to the nine in the counterfoil on or after Tuesday ?

*Cokeson.* (*Surprised*) How's that ?

(*Falder gives a sort of lurch ; he tries to pull himself together, but he has gone all to pieces.*)

*James.* (*Very grimly*) Out, I'm afraid, Cokeson. The cheque book remained in Mr. Walter's pocket till he came back from Trenton on Tuesday morning. In the face of this, Falder do you still deny that you altered both cheque and counterfoil ?



*James.* When Davis gave you the cheque was it exactly like this ?

*Falder.* Yes, sir, I think so.

*James.* You know that Walter drew the cheque for nine pounds only.

*Falder.* No, sir, it was for ninety.

*James.* It was for nine pounds, Falder.

*Falder.* I don't understand, sir.

*James.* The fact is that the cheque has been altered. This is to be seen whether it was altered by you or by Davis.

*Cokeson.* Take your time and think before you reply.

*Falder.* It was not altered by me, sir.

*James.* The cheque was given to Cokeson by Mr. Walter at 1 o'clock. We remember this because it was the hour of Cokeson's lunch.

*Cokeson.* Yes, I could not leave my lunch.

*James.* Yes, and therefore, Cokeson gave the cheque to Davis. It was cashed by you at 1.15. This we know because the cashier says that it was the last cheque he handled that day before his lunch.

*Falder.* I remember it, sir. Davis gave the cheque to me because he was with some of his friends who were giving him a farewell party.

*James.* Do you then say that Davis altered the cheque ?

*Falder.* I don't know, sir, but it is very strange.

(Walter comes close to his father and says something to him in a low voice.

*James.* Davis has not been here again after Saturday ?  
(Eager to help Falder somehow, and feeling pleased to see some signs of good humour on the face of James How.

*Cokeson.* No, he sailed on Monday.

*James.* Did Davis come before sailing, Falder ?

*Falder.* No, sir.

*James.* Well then, what do you say about changing the figures both in words and figures on the counterfoil of the cheque after Tuesday ?

*Cokeson.* How do you say that, sir ?

(Falder starts, then tries to maintain himself, but soon giving way.

*James.* Falder has almost confessed his crime, Mr. Cokeson. The cheque book remained in the pocket of Walter till Tuesday morning when he returned from Trenton. Under these circumstances how can Falder say that he did not make alterations both in the cheque and the counterfoil.



*Falder.* No, sir—no, Mr. How. I did it, sir ; I did it.

*Cokeson.* (*Succumbing to his feelings*) Dear, dear ! what a thing to do !

*Falder.* I wanted the money so badly, sir. I didn't know what I was doing.

*Cokeson.* However such a thing could have come into your head !

*Falder.* (*Grasping at the words*) I can't think, sir, really ! It was just a minute of madness.

*James.* A long minute, Falder. (*Tapping the Counterfoil.*) Four days at least.

*Falder.* Sir, I swear I didn't know what I'd done till afterwards, and then I hadn't the pluck. Oh, sir, look over it ! I'll pay the money back—I will, I promise.

*James.* Go into your room.

(*Falder*, with a swift imploring look, goes back into his room. There is silence.)

*James.* About as bad a case as there could be.

*Cokeson.* To break the law like that—in here !

*Walter.* What's to be done ?

*James.* Nothing for it. Prosecute.

*Walter.* It's his first offence.

*James.* (*Shaking his head*) I've grave doubts of that. Too neat a piece of swindling altogether.

*Cokeson.* I shouldn't be surprised if he was tempted.

*James.* Life's one long temptation, Cokeson.

*Cokeson.* Ye-es, but I'm speaking of the flesh and the devil, Mr. James. There was a woman come to see him this morning.

*Walter.* The woman we passed as we came in just now. Is it his wife ?

*Cokeson.* No, no relation (*Restraining what in jollier circumstances would have been a wink.*) A married person though.

*Walter.* How do you know ?

*Cokeson.* Brought her children. (*Scandalized.*) There they were outside the office.

*James.* A real bad egg.

*Walter.* I should like to give him a chance.

*James.* I can't forgive him for the sneaky way he went to work—counting on our suspecting young Davis if the matter came to light. It was the merest accident the cheque-book stayed in your pocket.

*Walter.* It *must* have been the temptation of a moment. He hadn't time.



*Falder.* I am sorry, sir, I did it.

*Cokeson.* Dear boy, did you do it ?

*Falder.* I was in urgent need of money, sir. I did not know how I did it.

*Cokeson.* But how did it occur to you.

*Falder.* I can't remember, sir. It was a work of just a minute.

*James.* It must have been a long minute, Falder. A minute lasting four days from Friday to Tuesday.

*Falder.* Sir, I swear, I don't remember how I did it. Afterwards I did not have the courage to confess to you. Excuse me, sir, I will pay the money back. I promise I will pay the whole money.

*James.* Go back to your office.

(Falder looking at him piteously slowly goes back to his room. There is silence.

*James.* It is indeed a serious case.

*Cokeson.* Yes, very serious. Taking the law in his own hands.

*Walter.* What shall we do in the matter ?

*James.* We have no option but to prosecute him in a court of law.

*Walter.* It is his first offence.

*James.* I doubt whether it is really his first offence. It was a very clever piece of forgery.

*Cokeson.* I believe he did it under some great temptation.

*James.* Life itself is a long tale of temptations.

*Cokeson.* You are right, sir, but I am speaking of the temptations of the flesh. A woman came to see him this morning.

*Walter.* Was it the woman we met as we were coming up ? Is she his wife ?

*Cokeson.* No, no, not even a relation. She is a married woman.

*Walter.* How do you know that ?

*Cokeson.* Because she brought her children also.

*James.* A very bad case indeed.

*Walter.* I wish he could be given a chance.

*James.* I can't forgive him. I don't like the way in which he went back to his office this minute. He depended upon our suspecting Davis if the case were exposed. It was just a matter of chance that the pass-book remained in the pocket of Walter until after Davis sailed away.

*Walter.* Falder must have done the deed in a moment of some great temptation. He did not have much time to think.



*James.* A man doesn't succumb like that in a moment, if he's a clean mind and habits. He's rotten ; got the eyes of a man who can't keep his hands off when there's money about.

*Walter.* (*Dryly*) We hadn't noticed that before.

*James.* (*Brushing the remark aside*) I've seen lots of those fellows in my time. No doing anything with them except to keep 'em out of harm's way. They've got a blind spot.

*Walter.* It's penal servitude.

*Cokeson.* They're *nahsty* places—prisons.

*James.* [*Hesitating*] I don't see now it's possible to spare him. Out of the question to keep him in this office—honesty's the *sine qua non*.

*Cokeson.* [*Hypnotized*] Of course it is.

*James.* Equally out of the question to send him out amongst people who've no knowledge of this character. One must think of society.

*Walter.* But to brand him like this ?

*James.* If it had been a straightforward case I'd give him another chance. It's far from that. He has dissolute habits.

*Cokeson.* I didn't say that—extenuating circumstances.

*James.* Some thing. He's gone to work in the most cold-blooded way to defraud his employers, and cast the blame on an innocent man. If that's not a case for the law to take its course, I don't know what is.

*Walter.* For the sake of his future, though.

*James.* [*Sarcastically*] According to you, no one would ever prosecute.

*Walter.* [*Nettled*] I hate the idea of it.

*Cokeson.* We must have protection.

*James.* This is degenerating into talk.

*[He moves towards the partners' room.]*

*Walter.* Put yourself in his place, father.

*James.* You ask too much of me.

*Walter.* We can't possibly tell the pressure there was on him.

*James.* You may depend on it, my boy, if a man is going to do this sort of thing he'll do it, pressure or no pressure ; if he is n't nothing'll make him.

*Walter.* He'll never do it again.

*Cokeson.* [*Fatuously*] S'pose I were to have a talk with him. We don't want to be hard on the young man.



*James.* A man can't yield to temptation if he has a strong character. He is a weak character. His eyes give the impression that he cannot help himself if there is money about him.

*Walter.* We have never noticed such a thing before.

*James.* I know many such fellows. They don't do any such thing as a matter of policy. They abstain themselves from doing any such thing in order to ensure against suspicion. But they have a weak character.

*Walter.* The punishment for the crime would be imprisonment.

*Cokeson.* Prisons are a very nasty and demoralising place.

*James.* (*Hesitating*) I don't see how it's possible to spare him from imprisonment. It is out of question to keep him in this office any longer. Honesty is the first condition of service in our office.

*Cokeson* (*Hypnotized*) of course, it is, sir.

*James.* Equally out of the question to send him out amongst people who have no knowledge of his character. One must think of society.

*Walter.* But to brand him like this ?

*James.* If it had been a straightforward case. I'd give him another chance. It's far from that. He has dissolute habits.

*Cokeson.* I didn't say that—compelling circumstances.

*James.* Same thing. He's gone to work in the most coldblooded manner to defraud his employers, and cast the blame on an innocent man. If that's not a case for the law to take its course, I don't know what is.

*Walter.* I wanted you to give him a chance for the sake of his future.

*James.* (*Sarcastically*) According to you, no one would ever be prosecuted.

*Walter.* (*Nettled*) I have the idea of it.

*Cokeson.* We must seek the protection of the law.

*James.* We are drifting away in the stream of talk.

*Walter.* Just put yourself in Falder's place, father.

*James.* It is asking too much of me.

*Walter.* We can't say under what compelling circumstances he did the deed.

*James.* Always remember my boy, if a man is determined to do such a thing, he will do it whether there is any pressure on him or not. If he is determined not to do such a thing, no pressure would compel him to do so.

*Walter.* He will never repeat the crime, sir.

*Cokeson.* Would you permit me, sir, to have a talk with Falder. We don't propose to be very hard with him.



*James.* That'll do, Cokeson. I've made up my mind.

*(He passes into the partners' room.)*

*Cokeson.* *(After a doubtful moment)* We must excuse your father. I don't want to go against your father ; if he thinks it right.

*Walter.* Confound it, Cokeson ! why don't you back me up ? You know you feel—

*Cokeson.* *(On his dignity)* I really can't say what I feel.

*Walter.* We shall regret it.

*Cokeson.* He must have known what he was doing.

*Walter.* *(Bitterly)* "The quality of mercy is not strained."

*Cokeson.* *(Looking at him askance)* Come, come, Mr. Walter, We must try and see it sensible.

*Sweedle.* *(Entering with a tray)* Your lunch, sir.

*Cokeson.* Put it down !

*(While Sweedle is putting it down on Cokeson's table, the detective, Wister enters the outer office, and, finding no one there, comes to the inner doorway. He is a square, medium-sized man, clean-shaved, in a serviceable blue serge suit and stroud boots.)*

*Wister.* *(To Walter)* From Scotland Yard, sir. Detective Sergeant Wister.

*Walter.* *(Askance)* Very well ! I'll speak to my father.

*(He goes into the partners' room. James enters.)*

*James.* Morning !

*(In answer to an appealing gesture from Cokeson.)*

I'm sorry ; I'd stop short of this if I felt I could. Open that door. *(Sweedle, wondering and scared, opens it.)* Come here, Mr. Falder.

*(As Falder comes shrinkingly out, the detective, in obedience to a sign from James, slips his hand out and grasps his arm.)*

*Falder.* *(Recoiling)* Oh ! no—oh ! no !

*Wister.* Come, come, there's good lad.

*James.* I charge him with felony.

*Falder.* Oh, sir ! There's someone—I did it for her. Let me be till to-morrow.

*(James motions with his head. At that sign of hardness, Falder becomes rigid. Then, turning, he goes out quietly in the detective's grip. James follows, stiff and erect. Sweedle, rushing to the door with open mouth, pursues them through the outer office into the corridor. When they have all disappeared Cokeson spins completely round and makes a rush for the outer office.)*

*Cokeson.* *(Hoarsely)* Here ! Here ! What are we doing ?

*(There is silence. He takes out his handkerchief and mops the sweat from his face. Going back blindly to his table, he sits down, and stares blankly at his lunch.)*

*The curtain falls.*



*James.* No, it is enough, Cokeson. I have decided what to do.  
(*He goes into his room.*)

*Cokeson.* We must excuse your father. I can't act against your father's wish. What he thinks is right.

*Walter.* Damn it, Cokeson; why did you not support me? You know you feel—

*Cokeson.* I don't know what I feel, Walter.

*Walter.* We shall be sorry later for prosecuting him.

*Cokeson.* Falder should have known what crime he was committing.

*Walter.* Mercy should not be circumscribed by any condition.

*Cokeson.* Well, Mr. Walter, we must judge the case objectively.

*Sweedle.* Your lunch is ready, sir.

*Cokeson.* Keep it there.

(While Sweedle is putting the lunch-box down on Cokeson's table, the detective Wister enters the outer office, and finding no one there, comes to the inner doorway. He is a square, medium sized man, clean-shaved, in a serviceable blue serge suit and boots.)

*Wister.* I have come from Scotland Yard Police. I am Detective-Sergeant, Wister.

*Walter.* Very well! I will inform my father.

(*James comes in.*)

*James.* Good-morning, Mr. Wister. I am sorry to have given you trouble. I will not have proceeded further in this matter if I could help it. Mr. Falder, come here.

(As Falder comes shrinkingly out, the detective, in obedience to a sign from James, slips his hand out and grasps his arm.)

*Falder.* (*Recoiling.*) Oh! no—oh! no!

*Wister.* Come, come there's a good lad.

*James.* I charge him with felony.

*Falder.* Oh, sir! There's someone—I did it for her. Let me be free till tomorrow.

[James motions with his head. At that sign of hardness, Falder becomes rigid. Then, turning he goes out quietly in the detective's grip. James follows, stiff and erect. Sweedle, rushing to the door with open mouth, pursues them through the outer office into the corridor. When they have all disappeared, Cokeson spins completely round and makes a rush for the outer office.]

*Cokeson.* [*Hoarsely*] Here! Here! What are we doing?

[There is silence. He takes out his handkerchief and mops the sweat on his face. Going back to his table, he sits there mechanically, looking at his lunch blankly.]

[*Curtain falls.*]



## ACT II

[A Court of Justice, on a foggy October afternoon—crowded with barristers, solicitors, reporters, ushers and jurymen. Sitting in the large, solid dock is *Falder*, with a warder on either side of him placed there for his safe custody, but seemingly indifferent to and unconscious of his presence. *Falder* is sitting exactly opposite to the *Judge*, who, raised above the clamour of the court, also seems unconscious of and indifferent to everything. *Harold Cleaver*, the counsel for the Crown, is a dried, yellowish man, of more than middle age, in a wig worn almost to the colour of his face. *Hector Frome*, the counsel for the defence, is a young, tall man, clean-shaved, in a very white wig. Among the spectators, having already given their evidence, are *James* and *Walter How*, and *Cowley*, the cashier. *Wister*, the detective, is just leaving the witness-box.]

*Cleaver*. That is the case for the Crown, me lud !

[*Gathering his robes together, he sits down.*]

*Frome*. [*Rising and bowing to the Judge*] If it please your lordship and members of the jury. I am not going to dispute the fact that the prisoner altered this cheque, but I am going to put before you evidence as to the condition of his mind, and to submit that you would not be justified in finding that he was responsible for his actions at the time. I am going to show you, in fact, that he did this in a moment of aberration, amounting to temporary insanity, caused by the violent distress under which he was labouring. Gentlemen, the prisoner is only twenty-three years old. I shall call before you a woman from whom you will learn the events that led up to this act. You will hear from her own lips the tragic circumstances of her life, the still more tragic infatuation with which she has inspired the prisoner. This woman, gentlemen, has been leading a miserable existence with a husband who habitually ill-uses her, from whom she actually goes in terror of her life. I am not, of course, saying that it's either right or desirable for a young man to fall in love with a married woman, or that it's his business to rescue her from an ogre-like husband. I'm not saying anything of the sort. But we all know the power of the passion of love ; and I would ask you to remember gentlemen, in listening to her evidence, that, married to a drunken and violent husband, she has no power to get rid to him : for, as you know, another offence besides violence is necessary to enable a woman to obtain a divorce ; and of this offence it does not appear that her husband is guilty.



## ACT II

[A Court of Justice, on a foggy October afternoon—crowded with barristers, solicitors, reporters, ushers, and jurymen Sitting in the large, solid dock is Falder, with a warder on either side of him, placed there for his safe custody, but seemingly indifferent to and unconscious of everything. Falder is sitting just opposite to the Judge. Harold Cleaver the Counsel for the Crown, is a dried, yellowish man, of more than middle age, in a wig worn almost to the colour of his face. Hector Frome, the Counsel for the defence, is a young, tall man, clean-shaved in a very white wig. Among the spectators, having already given their evidence, are James and Walter How, and Cowley, the cashier. Wister, the detective, is just leaving the witness box.]

*Cleaver:* I have put in the case for the Crown, my lord.

[*He sits down.*]

*Frome.* Your lordship and members of the Jury! I am not going to dispute the fact that the convict altered the figures in the cheque. But I am going to place before you the mental condition of the convict in which he committed the forgery. I would plead before you that the convict committed the crime in such an excited state of mind that he did not quite know what he was going to do, and therefore, he was not responsible for his own actions. I want to explain before you that he did the deed in a terrible mental agitation and distress. His mental distress almost amounted to a fit of temporary madness. The convict is a young man of twenty-three only. I shall produce before you a young woman who will relate all the circumstances leading to the commission of the crime. She will herself relate to you the hard circumstances under which she is struggling, and will also place before you the even more tragic fact that the convict is deeply in love with her. This woman has been leading a very hard and miserable life with her husband. Her husband habitually ill-treats her, so that she virtually lives in danger of her life. I do not suggest that it is either right or even desirable for a young man to love a married woman. Nor do I suggest that it is his duty to protect her from her cruel husband. I mean no such thing. But we have to admit the power of passionate love. When you listen to the evidence of the young woman, I would request you to remember that having married a drunken and ill-tempered husband, she could not get legal divorce from him until he was found guilty of one more offence besides cruelty; and the husband is not apparently guilty of any other offence.



*The Judge.* Is this relevant, Mr. Frome?

*Frome.* My lord, I submit, extremely—I shall be able to show your lordship that directly.

*The Judge.* Very well.

*Frome.* In these circumstances, what alternatives were left to her? She could either go on living with this drunkard, in terror of her life; or she could apply to the Court for a separation order. Well, gentlemen, my experience of such cases assures me that this would have given her very insufficient protection from the violence of such a man; and even if effectual would very likely have reduced her either to the workhouse or the streets—for it's not easy, as she is now finding, for an unskilled woman without means of livelihood to support herself and her children without resorting either to the Poor Law or—to speak quite plainly—to the sale of her body.

*The Judge.* You are ranging far, Mr. Frome.

*Frome.* I shall fire point-blank in a minute, my lord.

*The Judge.* Let us hope so.

*Frome.* Now, gentlemen, mark—and this is what I have been leading up to—this woman will tell you, and the prisoner will confirm her, that, confronted with such alternatives, she set her whole hopes on herself, knowing the feeling with which she had inspired him. She saw a way out of her misery by going with him to a new country, where they would both be unknown, and might pass as husband and wife. This was a desperate and, as my friend Mr. Cleaver will no doubt call it, an immoral resolution; but, as a fact, the minds of both of them were constantly turned towards it. One wrong is no excuse for another, and those who are never likely to be faced by such a situation possibly have the right to hold up their hands—as to that I prefer to say nothing. But whatever view you take, gentlemen, of this part of the prisoner's story whatever opinion you form of the right of these two young people under such circumstances to take the law into their own hands—the fact remains that this young woman in her distress, and this young man, little more than a boy, who was so devotedly attached to her *did* conceive this—if you like—repensible design of going away together. Now, for that, of course, they required money, and—they had none. As to the actual events of the morning of July 7th, on which this cheque was altered, the events on which I rely to prove the defendant's irresponsibility—I shall allow those events to speak for themselves, through the lips of my witness, Robert Cokeson. [*He turns, looks round, takes up a sheet of paper, and waits.*]

(Cokeson is summoned into court, and goes into the witness box, holding his hat before him. The oath is administered to him.

*Frome.* What is your name?



*The Judge.* Does this statement have a direct bearing on the case, Mr. Frome ?

*Frome.* Yes, my lord, exactly. I will immediately prove this to your Lordship.

*The Judge.* Well, then, go on.

*Frome.* In this situation, she has only two alternatives. She could either keep living under constant danger of her life with her violent husband, or she could apply to the court for obtaining legal divorce. My experience in such cases is that the court can hardly protect a poor woman from the atrocities of a cruel husband. And even if protection is granted to her in the form of legal divorce, she is left with no alternative but to find shelter in the poor house or beg in streets, for a poor and unskilled woman like her, cannot possibly maintain herself and her family by any other means possible. All that she can do is either to enter the beggar-home under the provisions of the Poor Law, or otherwise to live by prostitution.

*The Judge.* You are going off the point, Mr. Frome.

*Frome.* Sir. I shall come to the exact point in a minute.

*The Judge.* Let us hope so.

*Frome.* Well, gentlemen, I come to my point. The woman will declare before you and the convict will confirm her statement that in her hard plight she entirely depended upon him for help, for she knew that he loved her passionately. She found that the only way of escape from her misery was to go away with the convict to some foreign country, where they would be unknown and therefore might live as husband and wife. This was her last desperate solution, which Mr. Cleaver would, beyond doubt, describe as an immoral plan. But the truth is that both of them had set their minds upon this project. It is true that one wrong can be no justification for committing another wrong. Those who have no experience of such a dilemma will more certainly oppose and condemn this resolution of these unfortunate young people. I would say nothing to that. But whatever view you take of this peculiar dilemma of the convict and his beloved, and whatever opinion you may hold about their justification in flouting the law, the fact is that this young woman in her hard plight and this young man, who is just a lad of 23, and who loved her so passionately, decided together to embark on this plan of escaping together to some foreign land. And for that they naturally needed money, but unfortunately they had no money. The actual circumstances on the morning of July 7, when the cheque was altered, and on which my plea for defence is primarily based, I shall leave for my chief witness, Mr. Cokeson, to relate himself.

[*Cokeson* is called over. He goes into the witness-box with his hat in his hand. The oath is administered to him.]

*Frome.* What is your name ?



Cokeson. Robert Cokeson.

Frome. Are you managing clerk to the firm of solicitors who employ the prisoner ?

Cokeson. Ye-es,

Frome. How long had the prisoner been in their employ ?

Cokeson. Two years. No, I'm wrong there—all but seventeen days.

Frome. Had you him under your eye all that time ?

Cokeson. Except Sundays and holidays

Frome. Quite so. Let us hear, please, what you have to say about his general character during those two years.

Cokeson. (*Confidentially to the jury, and as if a little surprised at being asked*) He was a nice, pleasant spoken young man. I'd no fault to find with him—quite the contrary. It was a great surprise to me when he did a thing like that.

Frome. Did he ever give you reason to suspect his honesty ?

Cokeson. No ! To have dishonesty in our office, that'd never do.

Frome. I'm sure the jury fully appreciate that, Mr. Cokeson.

Cokeson. Every man of business knows that honesty's the *sine qua non*.

Frome. Do you give him a good character all round, or do you not ?

Cokeson. [*Turning to the Judge*] Certainly. We were all very jolly and pleasant together, until this happened. Quite upset me.

Frome. Now coming to the morning of the 7th of July, the morning on which the cheque was altered. What have you to say about his demeanour that morning ?

Cokeson. [*To the jury*] If you ask me, I don't think he was quite *compos* when he did it.

The Judge. [*Sharply*] Are you suggesting that he was insane ?

Cokeson. Not *compos*.

The Judge. A little more precision, please.

Frome. [*Smoothly*] Just tell us, Mr. Cokeson.

Cokeson. [*Somewhat outraged*] Well, in my opinion— [*Looking at the Judge*—such as it is—he was jumpy at the time. The jury will understand my meaning.

Frome. Will you tell us how you came to that conclusion ?



*Cokeson.* Robert Cokeson.

*Frome.* Are you managing clerk in the firm in which Falder was also employed?

*Cokeson.* Yes.

*Frome.* How long had Falder been serving in the firm?

*Cokeson.* For two years. No, there I am wrong—he served for seventeen days less than two years.

*Frome.* Did you keep him under your direct supervision during this period?

*Cokeson.* Yes, sir, except on Sundays and holidays.

*Frome.* Quite right. Let us know your impression about his conduct and character during those two years of this service in the firm,

*Cokeson.* He was always a gentle, sweet-tempered young man. We found no fault with him. On the contrary, he was a very pleasant young lad. When we came to know that he had committed such a forgery, we were all very much surprised and grieved.

*Frome.* Did you ever suspect his honesty earlier?

*Cokeson.* No. We can never put up with dishonesty in our office.

*Frome.* I believe the Jury approves of what you say.

*Cokeson.* Everybody knows that honesty is the basic principle in every business.

*Frome.* Do you mean to say that Falder always had a good character, or do you have any exceptions to this general remark?

*Cokeson.* (Facing the Judge.) Surely, he always had a good character. We, the colleagues in the office, had very happy and friendly relations until this unfortunate event. I was extremely confused and grieved at this incident.

*Frome.* Well, let us consider the morning of the 7th of July when this cheque was altered. Do you have anything special to say about Falder's behaviour and bearing on that morning?

*Cokeson.* My personal impression is that Falder was not in his normal state of mind.

*The Judge.* Do you mean to say that he was mad?

*Cokeson.* Not in his normal state of mind.

*The Judge.* Make your point a little more clear.

*Frome.* Well, Mr. Cokeson, turn to us.

*Cokeson.* Well, my impression is that he was little restless at that time. I hope my meaning is clear to the Jury.

*Frome.* Will you tell the court how did you come to the conclusion that he was restless and agitated?



*Cokeson.* Ye-es, I will. I have my lunch in from the restaurant, a chop and a potato—saves time. That day it happened to come just as Mr. Walter How handed me the cheque. Well. I like it hot ; so I went into the clerk's office and I handed the cheque to Davis, the other clerk, and told him to get change. I noticed young Falder walking up and down. I said to him : "This is not the Zoological Gardens, Falder."

*Frome.* Do you remember what he answered ?

*Cokeson.* Ye-es : "I wish to God it were !" Struck me as funny.

*Frome.* Did you notice anything else peculiar ?

*Cokeson.* I did.

*Frome.* What was that ?

*Cokeson.* His collar was unbuttoned. Now, I like a young man to be neat. I said to him : "Your collar's unbuttoned".

*Frome.* And what did he answer ?

*Cokeson.* Stared at me. It wasn't nice.

*The Judge.* Stared at you ? Isn't that a very common practice ?

*Cokeson.* Ye-es, but it was the look in his eyes. I can't explain my meaning—it was funny.

*Frome.* Had you ever seen such a look in his eyes before ?

*Cokeson.* No. If I had I should have spoken to the partners. We can't have anything eccentric in our profession.

*The Judge.* Did you speak to them on that occasion ?

*Cokeson.* (*Confidentially*) Well, I didn't like to trouble them without *prima facie* evidence.

*Frome.* But it made a very distinct impression on your mind ?

*Cokeson.* Ye-es. The clerk Davis could have told you the same.

*Frome.* Quite so. It's very unfortunate that we've not got him here. Now can you tell me of the morning on which the discovery of the forgery was made ? That would be the 18th. Did anything happen that morning ?

*Cokeson.* (*With his hand to his ear*) I'm a little deaf.

*Frome.* Was there anything in the course of that morning—I mean before the discovery—that caught your attention ?

*Cokeson.* Ye-es—a woman.



*Cokeson.* Yes, I will tell you. I get my lunch from the hotel, just a chop and a potato. Because it saves time. That day it happened that my lunch came just at the moment when Mr. Walter gave me the cheque. I always take my lunch hot. So I went to Mr. Davis, the other clerk, and asked him to take the cheque to the bank and encash it. At that time I noticed that Falder was walking up and down in the room in an excited state of mind. I said to him in joke, "Falder this office is not a Zoological Garden."

*Frome.* And what was his reply ?

*Cokeson.* His reply was "I pray to God it were really a Zoological Garden." This reply appeared very strange to me.

*Frome.* Did you find any other thing peculiar in him ?

*Cokeson.* Yes.

*Frome.* What peculiarity was that ?

*Cokeson.* His collar was unbuttoned and hanging loose. I like to see a young man smartly dressed. Therefore, I reminded Falder that his collar was unbuttoned.

*Frome.* And what was his reply ?

*Cokeson.* He only looked hard at me. I was not pleased with his looks.

*The Judge.* He stared at you. There is nothing very peculiar about it.

*Cokeson.* Yes, but his looks were very peculiar. I cannot explain what impression was there. They looked very funny.

*Frome.* Did you ever see such funny eyes before also ?

*Cokeson.* No. Had I seen those peculiar eyes earlier, I should have reported the matter to the partners. We can't allow anything abnormal in our office.

*The Judge.* Did you report to your partners on that occasion ?

*Cokeson.* Well, I did not, because I did not want to give any trouble to them until there was some evidence against him.

*Frome.* But his looks made a deep impression on your mind ?

*Cokeson.* Yes. The same reply would have been given to you by the other clerk, Davis.

*Frome.* Well, unfortunately, Davis is not here. But what do you say of his behaviour on the morning of the day when the forgery was discovered ? The day of the discovery was the 18th. Did you observe anything new or strange in his behaviour ?

*Cokeson.* (Putting his hand to the ear.) Please, speak a little louder, I am a little hard of hearing.

*Frome.* Did there happen anything unusual on the morning when the forgery was discovered ? Was there anything that caught your attention ?

*Cokeson.* Yes, there came a woman to meet Falder.



*The Judge.* How is *this* relevant, Mr. Frome ?

*Frome.* I am trying to establish the state of mind in which the prisoner committed this act, my lord.

*The Judge.* I quite appreciate that. But this was long after the act.

*Frome.* Yes, my lord, but it contributes to my contention.

*The Judge.* Well !

*Frome.* You say a woman. Do you mean that she came to the Office ?

*Cokeson.* Ye-es.

*Frome.* What for ?

*Cokeson.* Asked to see young Falder ; he was out at the moment.

*Frome.* Did you see her ?

*Cokeson.* I did.

*Frome.* Did she come alone ?

*Cokeson.* (*Confidentially*) Well, there you put me in a difficulty. I mustn't tell you what the office-boy told me.

*Frome.* Quite so, Mr. Cokeson, quite so—

*Cokeson.* (*Breaking in with an air of "You are young—leave it to me"*) But I think we can get round it. In answer to a question put to her by a third party the woman said to me : "They're mine, sir".

*The Judge.* What are ? What were ?

*Cokeson.* Her children. They were outside.

*The Judge.* How do you know ?

*Cokeson.* Your lordship mustn't ask me that, or I shall have to tell you what I was told—and that'd never do.

*The Judge.* (*Smiling*) The office-boy made a statement.

*Cokeson.* Egg-zactly.

*Frome.* What I want to ask you, Mr. Cokeson, is that. In the course of her appeal to see Falder, did the woman say anything that you specially remember ?

*Cokeson.* (*Looking at him as if to encourage him to complete the sentence*) A leetle more, sir.

*Frome.* Or did she not ?

*Cokeson.* She did. I shouldn't like you to have led me to the answer.

*Frome.* [*With an irritated Smile*] Will you tell the jury what it was ?

*Cokeson.* "It's a matter of life and death."



*The Judge.* How is this observation related with the incident, Mr. Frome ?

*Frome.* My lord, I want to set before you the mental background of the prisoner under which the forgery was committed.

*The Judge.* Yes, I understand your point. But the forgery was discovered several days after its commission.

*Frome.* My lord, my statement contributes to the plea that I am going to put forth.

*The Judge.* Well, go on.

*Frome.* You said that you saw a woman. Did she come to the office ?

*Cokeson.* Yes.

*Frome.* What was her business ?

*Cokeson.* She came to meet Falder but he was out that time.

*Frome.* Did you meet her then ?

*Cokeson.* Yes, I did.

*Frome.* Was she all alone ?

*Cokeson.* Well, you put a very difficult question to me. I do not want to say what Sweedle reported to me.

*Frome.* You are right, Mr. Cokeson.

*Cokeson.* I think we can ignore this. However, when I asked her whose children were playing outside, she said that they were her children.

*The Judge.* What children were they ?

*Cokeson.* They were her children playing outside.

*The Judge.* How do you know that they were her children ?

*Cokeson.* I beseech your Lordship not to put this question to me or I shall have to tell something which I only heard from another person and that may not be reasonable.

*The Judge.* You mean to say that the office boy told you something.

*Cokeson.* Yes, exactly.

*Frome.* I just want to ask you one question. When she appealed to you to let her see Falder, did you see anything very unusual about her ?

*Cokeson.* Tell me, sir, a little more plainly what you want to ask.

*Frome.* Was she all normal ?

*Cokeson.* Yes, she seemed quite normal. I should not have liked you to ask this question to me.

*Frome.* Well, will you tell the Jury what it was ?

*Cokeson.* She said, "It is a matter of life and death."



*Foreman of the Jury.* Do you mean the woman said that?

*Cokeson.* [*Nodding*] It's not the sort of thing you like to have said to you.

*Frome.* [*A little impatiently*] Did Falder come in while she was there? [*Cokeson nods*]. And she saw him, and went away.

*Cokeson.* Ah! there I can't follow you. I didn't see her go.

*Frome.* Well, is she there now?

*Cokeson.* [*With an indulgent smile*] No!

*Frome.* Thank you, Mr. Cokeson. [*He sits down.*]

*Cleaver.* [*Rising*] You say that on the morning of the forgery the prisoner was jumpy. Well, now, sir, what precisely do you mean by that word?

*Cokeson.* [*Indulgently*] I want you to understand. Have you ever seen a dog that's lost its master? He was kind of everywhere at once with his eyes.

*Cleaver.* Thank you; I was coming to his eyes. You called them "funny." What are we to understand by that, strange, or what?

*Cokeson.* Ye-es, funny.

*Cleaver.* [*Sharply*] Yes, sir, but what may be funny to you may not be funny to me, or to the jury. Did they look frightened, or shy, or fierce, or what?

*Cokeson.* You make it very hard for me. I give you the word and you want me to give you another.

*Cleaver.* [*Rapping his desk*] Does "funny" mean mad?

*Cokeson.* Not mad, fun—

*Cleaver.* Very well! Now you say he had his collar unbuttoned? Was it a hot day?

*Cokeson.* Ye-es; I think it was.

*Cleaver.* And did he button it when you called his attention to it?

*Cokeson.* Ye-es, I think he did.

*Cleaver.* Would you say that denoted insanity?

[*He sits down.* *Cokeson*, who has opened his mouth to reply is left gaping.

*Frome.* [*Rising hastily*] Have you ever caught him in that dishevelled state before?



*Foreman of the Jury.* Do you mean to say that these words were spoken by the woman?

*Cokeson.* It is not a thing that you may like to listen.

*Frome.* Did Falder arrive while the woman was talking to you? [*Cokeson nods*] And then do you say that she met Falder and went away?

*Cokeson.* I don't quite follow what you mean, sir. I did not of course, see her going out.

*Frome.* Is the woman still there?

*Cokeson.* No.

*Frome.* Thank you, Mr. Cokeson.

[*Frome sits down. Cleaver rises*]

*Cleaver.* You said that on the morning of the commission of the forgery the prisoner had funny eyes. The prisoner, you said, was jumpy. What exactly do you mean by this expression?

*Cokeson.* I want you to understand my meaning. Have you ever seen a dog that has lost its master? This was exactly the position of Falder. His eyes were exactly like the eyes of that forsaken dog.

*Cleaver.* Thank you; I was going to refer to his eyes. You describe his eyes as funny. What do you exactly mean by this expression? Do you mean to say that they were strange or what was your meaning?

*Cokeson.* Yes, his eyes were funny.

*Cleaver.* Well, sir, what may be funny to one person, may not be funny to the other. Tell us precisely whether his eyes were frightened or shy or violent or what?

*Cokeson.* It is very difficult for me to explain that to you. I have given you the precise word and you want me to give a substitute for it.

*Cleaver.* Does "Funny" mean mad?

*Cokeson.* No, I only mean funny.

*Cokeson.* Well, you said that he had unbuttoned his collar. Was it because it was a hot day?

*Cokeson.* Yes, I think it was a hot day.

*Cleaver.* And did he button up his collar when you drew his attention to it?

*Cokeson.* Yes, I think he did.

*Cleaver.* Does it in any way signify that Falder was mad?

(*Cleaver sits down. Cokeson opens his mouth to say something, but is unable to speak.*)

*Frome.* (*Rising.*) Did you ever see him in that untidy manner ever before also?



*Cokeson.* No ! He was *always* clean and quite.

*Frome.* That will do, thank you.

[*Cokeson* turns blandly to the *Judge*, as though to rebuke counsel for not remembering that the *Judge* might wish to have a chance; arriving at the conclusion that he is to be asked nothing further, he turns and descends from the box and sits down next to *James* and *Walter*.

*Frome.* Ruth Honeywill.

[*Ruth* comes into court, and takes her stand stoically in the witness-box. She is sworn.

*Frome.* What is your name please ?

*Ruth.* Ruth Honeywill.

*Frome.* How old are you ?

*Ruth.* Twenty-six.

*Frome.* You are a married women, living with your husband ?  
A little louder.

*Ruth.* No, sir ; not since July.

*Frome.* Have you any children ?

*Frome.* Are they living with you ?

*Ruth.* Yes, sir.

*Frome.* You know the prisoner ?

*Ruth.* (*Looking at him*) Yes.

*Frome.* What was the nature of your relations with him ?

*Ruth.* We were friends.

*The Judge.* Friends.

*Ruth.* (*Simply*) Lovers, sir.

*The Judge.* (*Sharply*) In what sense do you use that word ?

*Ruth.* We love each other.

*The Judge.* Yes, but—

*Ruth.* (*Shaking her head*) No, your lordship—not yet.

*The Judge.* Not yet ! H'm ! (*He looks from Ruth to Falder*)  
Well !

*Frome.* What is your husband ?

*Ruth.* Traveller.

*Frome.* And what was the nature of your married life ?

*Ruth.* (*Shaking her head*) It don't bear talking about.

*Frome.* Did he ill-treat you, or what ?

*Ruth.* Ever since my first was born.

*Frome.* In what way ?

*Ruth.* I'd rather not say. All sorts of ways.



*Cokeson.* No, he was always smart.

*Frome.* That is enough, thank you.

(Cokeson suddenly turns to the Judge, as if suggesting to the counsel that the Judge should be given a chance to speak. But now realizing that he was to be asked nothing more, he turns and walks out of the witness-box, and sits down by the side of James and Walter.

(Then Ruth was called and she comes into Court and stands firmly in the witness-box. Oath is administered to her.

*Frome.* What is your name, please ?

*Ruth.* Ruth Honeywill.

*Frome.* What is your age ?

*Ruth.* I am 26 years old.

*Frome.* Are you a married woman ? Do you live with your husband ?

*Ruth.* No sir, I have not been living with my husband since July.

*Frome.* Do you have children ?

*Ruth.* Yes sir, I have two children.

*Frome.* Do the children live with you ?

*Ruth.* Yes, sir.

*Frome.* Do you recognize the prisoner ?

*Ruth.* Yes, sir.

*Frome.* What kind of relation do you have with him ?

*Ruth.* We are friends.

*The Judge.* Were you friends ?

*Ruth.* We were lovers, sir.

*The Judge.* In what sense do you say that you were lovers ?

*Ruth.* We loved each other.

*The Judge.* Yes, but did you have... ..[The Judge was probably going to suggest whether she had sex relations.]

*Ruth.* No, my lord—not yet.

*The Judge.* Not yet, well.

*Frome.* What is your husband ?

*Ruth.* Just a wanderer.

*Frome.* What has been the nature of your married life with your husband ?

*Ruth.* It is out of point here, sir.

*Frome.* Did he ill-treat you ?

*Ruth.* I am not inclined to give the details. He ill-treated me in all possible ways.



*The Judge.* I am afraid I must stop this, you know.

*Ruth.* (*Pointing to Falder*) He offered to take me out of it, sir. We were going to South America.

*Frome.* (*Hastily*) Yes, quite—and what prevented you?

*Ruth.* I was outside his office when he was taken away. It nearly broke my heart.

*Frome.* You knew, then, that he had been arrested?

*Ruth.* Yes, sir. I called at his office afterwards, and (*pointing to Cokeson*) that gentleman told me all about it.

*Frome.* Now, do you remember the morning of Friday, July 7th?

*Ruth.* Yes.

*Frome.* Why?

*Ruth.* My husband nearly strangled me that morning.

*The Judge.* Nearly strangled you!

*Ruth.* [*Bowing her head*] Yes, my lord.

*Frome.* With his hands, or—?

*Ruth.* Yes, I just managed to get away from him. I went straight to my friend. It was eight o'clock.

*The Judge.* In the morning? Your husband was not under the influence of liquor then?

*Ruth.* It wasn't always that.

*Frome.* In what condition were you?

*Ruth.* In very bad condition, sir. My dress was torn, and I was half choking.

*Frome.* Did you tell your friend what had happened?

*Ruth.* Yes. I wish I never had.

*Frome.* It upset him?

*Ruth.* Dreadfully.

*Frome.* Did he ever speak to you about a cheque?

*Ruth.* Never.

*Frome.* Did he ever give you any money?

*Ruth.* Yes.

*Frome.* When was that?

*Ruth.* On Saturday.

*Frome.* The 8th?

*Ruth.* To buy an outfit for me and the children, and get all ready to start.



*The Judge.* Well, let us stop this talk.

*Ruth.* (Pointing to Falder.) He proposed to take me to South America.

*Frome.* Yes, but what prevented your actual going away?

*Ruth.* I was waiting for him outside his office when he was taken away by the police. It broke my heart.

*Frome.* Then you came to know that he had been arrested on the charge of forgery.

*Ruth.* Yes, I met Cokeson afterwards and he told me the whole thing.

*Frome.* Well, do you remember that morning of Friday, July 7?

*Ruth.* Yes.

*Frome.* Why do you specially remember that morning?

*Ruth.* Because my husband choked me nearly to death that morning.

*The Judge.* Did he strangle you with his hands or in what way?

*Ruth.* Yes, my Lord.

*Frome.* Did he strangle you with his hands or in what way?

*Ruth.* Yes, with his hands, and I just somehow escaped from his grip. I then went straight to my friend, Falder. It was 8 o'clock in the morning.

*The Judge.* Was it so early in the morning? Was your husband under the effect of wine?

*Ruth.* He was not always under the effect of wine.

*Frome.* What was your condition when you called on Falder?

*Ruth.* I was in a very bad condition, sir. My dress was torn and I was hardly able to breathe.

*Frome.* Did you tell Falder all that happened with you?

*Ruth.* Yes, and I am sorry that I did.

*Frome.* Was he very much disturbed at your news?

*Ruth.* Yes, sir, he was dreadfully disturbed.

*Frome.* Did he never refer to you about a cheque?

*Ruth.* No sir, never.

*Frome.* Did he ever give you money?

*Ruth.* Yes, sir.

*Frome.* When did he give you the money?

*Ruth.* On Saturday.

*Frome.* It was on the 8th morning, you mean?

*Ruth.* Yes, to buy clothes for me and the children and other things necessary for setting out to South America.



*Frome.* Did that surprise you, or not ?

*Ruth.* What, sir ?

*Frome.* That he had money to give you.

*Ruth.* Yes, because on the morning when my husband nearly killed me my friend cried because he hadn't the money to get me away. He told me afterwards he'd come into a windfall.

*Frome.* And when did you last see him ?

*Ruth.* The day he was taken away, sir. It was the day we were to have started.

*Frome.* Oh, yes, the morning of the arrest. Well, did you see him at all between the Friday and that morning ? (*Ruth nods.*) What was his manner then ?

*Ruth.* Dumb-like—sometimes he didn't seem able to say a word.

*Frome.* As if something unusual had happened to him ?

*Ruth.* Yes.

*Frome.* Painful, or pleasant, or what ?

*Ruth.* Like a fate hanging over him.

*Frome.* (*Hesitating*) Tell me, did you love the defendant very much ?

*Ruth.* (*Bowing her head*) Yes.

*Frome.* And had he a very great affection for you ?

*Ruth.* (*Looking at Falder*) Yes, sir.

*Frome.* Now, ma'am, do you or do you not think that your danger and unhappiness would seriously affect his balance, his control over his actions ?

*Ruth.* Yes.

*Frome.* His reason, even ?

*Ruth.* For a moment like, I think it would.

*Frome.* Was he very much upset that Friday morning, or was he fairly calm ?

*Ruth.* Dreadfully upset. I could hardly bear to let him go from me.

*Frome.* Do you still love him ?

*Ruth.* (*With her eyes on Falder*) He's ruined himself for me.

*Frome.* Thank you.

*He sits down. Ruth remains stoically upright in the witness box.*

*Cleaver.* (*In a considerate voice*) When you left him on the morning of Friday the 7th you would not say that he was out of his mind, I suppose ?

*Ruth.* No, sir.

*Cleaver.* Thank you : I've no further question to ask you.



*Frome.* Were you not surprised when he gave you the money ?

*Ruth.* Do you mean about the money ?

*Frome.* Yes, surprised that he gave you money.

*Ruth.* Yes, I was surprised. On the morning when my husband almost strangled me to death, Falder had no money. He almost cried because for want of money he could not take me to South America. He told me later that he got the money by chance.

*Frome.* And when did you see him last ?

*Ruth.* The day he was arrested by the police. It was the day when we were scheduled to go to South America.

*Frome.* Yes, it was the morning when he was arrested. Well, did you see him on any day between Friday and the day of his arrest ? (*Ruth admits.*) And if you saw him, what was his manner then ?

*Ruth.* He was almost dumb, as if he was unable to speak.

*Frome.* Did you not feel that something unusual had happened to him ?

*Ruth.* Yes, I did feel.

*Frome.* Was he sorry or happy ?

*Ruth.* He looked as if he was under the shadow of some grim fate

*Frome.* Did you love Falder very much ?

*Ruth.* Yes, very much.

*Frome.* Well, madam, were you not conscious of the fact that your happiness or unhappiness would seriously affect the balance of his mind and nerves ?

*Ruth.* Yes, sir.

*Frome.* Did you know that the story of your difficulties and dangers would affect his mind also ?

*Ruth.* Yes, I almost felt like that.

*Frome.* Was Falder extremely agitated on the morning of that Friday, or was he almost normal.

*Ruth.* He was extremely disturbed. I could hardly allow him to go out in that state of mind.

*Frome.* Do you still love him ?

*Ruth.* Yes, all the more, because he has ruined himself for my sake.

*Frome.* That will do, thank you.

[*Frome sits down. Ruth remains standing rigidly in the witness box.*]

*Cleaver.* When you left Falder on the morning of Friday the 7th, do you think that he was almost in an insane state of mind ?

*Ruth.* No sir, not quite so.

*Cleaver.* Thank you, I have nothing more to ask.



*Ruth.* (*Bending a little forward to the jury*) I would have done the same for him ; I would indeed.

*The Judge.* Please, please ! You say your married life is an unhappy one ? Faults on both sides ?

*Ruth.* Only that I never bowed down to him. I don't see why I should, sir, not to a man like that.

*The Judge.* You refused to obey him ?

*Ruth.* (*Avoiding the question*) I've always studied him to keep things nice.

*The Judge.* Until you met the prisoner—was that it ?

*Ruth.* No ; even after that

*The Judge.* I ask, you know, because you seem to me to glory in this affection of yours for the prisoner.

*Ruth.* (*Hesitating*) I—I do. It's the only thing in my life now.

*The Judge.* (*Staring at her hard*) Well, step down, please.

*Ruth* looks at *Falder*, then passes quietly down and takes her seat among the witnesses.

*Frome.* I call the prisoner, my lord.

*Falder* leaves the dock ; goes into the witness-box, and is duly sworn.

*Frome.* What is your name ?

*Falder.* William Falder.

*Frome.* And age ?

*Falder.* Twenty-three.

*Frome.* You are not married ?

(*Falder shakes his head.*)

*Frome.* How long have you known the last witness ?

*Falder.* Six months.

*Frome.* Is her account of the relationship between you a correct one ?

*Falder.* Yes.

*Frome.* You became devotedly attached to her, however ?

*Falder.* Yes.

*The Judge.* Though you knew she was a married woman ?

*Falder.* I couldn't help it, your lordship.

*The Judge.* Couldn't help it ?

*Falder.* I didn't seem able to.

[*The Judge slightly shrugs his shoulders.*]

*Frome.* How did you come to know her ?

*Falder.* Through my married sister.

*Frome.* Did you know whether she was happy with her husband ?



*Ruth.* I would have run the same risk for him, if I could.

*The Judge.* Well, you said that your married life is not happy. Are there faults on both the sides ?

*Ruth.* My only fault is that I did not surrender myself to all his wishes. And I do not see even now why I should have completely surrendered myself to man like that.

*The Judge.* Do you mean to say that you did not obey him ?

*Ruth.* I always tried to keep all things in order for him.

*The Judge.* You were careful about him until you met Falder. Was it not so ?

*Ruth.* No, even after that.

*The Judge.* I ask you this question because I feel you pride yourself over your affection for the prisoner.

*Ruth.* Yes. I am proud. His affection is my most precious possession.

*The Judge.* Well, this is enough.

[*Ruth looks at Falder, then quietly steps down and sits among the witnesses. Falder leaves the dock, goes up to the witness-box and is sworn.*]

*Frome.* What is your name ?

*Falder.* William Falder.

*Frome.* What is your age ?

*Falder.* I am 23.

*Frome.* Are you married ?

[*Falder shakes his head in the negative.*]

*Frome.* How long have you known Ruth Honeywill, the last witness ?

*Falder.* I have known her for six months.

*Frome.* Is her account of the relationship between you and her quite correct ?

*Falder.* Yes.

*Frome.* You developed a great attachment with her.

*Falder.* Yes.

*The Judge.* Did you love her even when you knew that she was a married woman.

*Falder.* Yes, my Lord, because I couldn't help it.

*The Judge.* You couldn't help loving her ?

*Falder.* Yes, I was unable to give her up.

*Frome.* How did you develop your intimacy with her ?

*Falder.* It was through my married sister.

*Frome.* Did you have the knowledge that Ruth did not have happy relations with her husband ?



*Falder.* It was trouble all the time.

*Frome.* You knew her husband ?

*Falder.* Only through her—he's a brute.

*The Judge.* I can't allow indiscriminate abuse of a person not present.

*Frome.* [*Bowing*] If your lordship pleases. [*To Falder.*] You admit altering this cheque ?

[*Falder bows his head.*]

*Frome.* Carry your mind, please, to the morning of Friday July the 7th, and tell the jury what happened.

*Falder.* [*Turning to the Jury*] I was having my breakfast when she came. Her dress was all torn, and she was gasping and couldn't seem to get her breath at all ; there were the marks of his fingers round her throat ; her arm was bruised, and the blood had got into her eyes dreadfully. It frightened me and then when she told me, I felt—well—it was too much for me ! [*Hardenng suddenly.*] If you'd seen it having the feelings for her that I had, you'd have felt the same, I know.

*Frome.* Yes ?

*Falder.* When she left me—because I had to go to the office—I was out of my senses for fear that he'd do it again and thinking what I could do. I couldn't work—all the morning I was like that—simply couldn't fix my mind on anything. I couldn't think at all. I seemed to have to keep moving. When Davis—the other clerk—gave me the cheque—he said : "It'll do you good, Will, to have a run with this. You seem half off your chump this morning." Then when I had it in my hand—I don't know how it came, but it just flashed across me that if I put the *ty* and the nought there would be the money to get her away. It just came and went—I never thought of it again. Then Davis went out to his luncheon, and I don't really remember what I did till I'd pushed the cheque through to the cashier under the rail. I remember his saying "Notes ?" Then I suppose I knew what I'd done. Anyway, when I got outside I wanted to chuck myself under a bus ; I wanted to throw the money away ; but it seemed I was in for it, so I thought at any rate I'd save her. Of course the tickets I took for the passage and the little I gave her's been wasted, and all, except what I was obliged to spend myself, I've restored. I keep thinking over and over however it was I came to do it, and how I can't have it all again to do differently !

[*Falder is silent, twisting his hands before him.*]

*Frome.* How far is it from your office to the bank ?

*Falder.* Not more than fifty yards, sir.



*Falder.* Yes, I knew that she was all the time in trouble.

*Frome.* Did you know her husband also ?

*Falder.* Yes, only through Ruth. He is like a wild beast.

*The Judge.* I can't allow indecent words for a person not present in the court.

*Frome.* With your permission, your lordship. (*To Falder.*) Do you admit that you altered the cheque, Falder ? (*Falder admits.*) Carry your mind back to the morning of Friday, the 7th July, and tell the Jury what actually happened that day.

*Falder.* (*To the Jury.*) I was having my breakfast when she (Ruth) came. Her dress was torn and she could hardly breathe. She was panting. There were marks of fingers on her cheek and throat. Her arm was wounded. Her eyes looked red as if the blood of the face had collected in the eyes. I was extremely frightened when she told me what had happened. It was too much for me to tolerate. Gentleman, if you had seen her in that condition and if you had my feelings for her, I am sure you would have felt the same as I felt.

*Frome.* Yes.

*Falder.* When she left me—because I was in a hurry to go to the office, I was out of my senses for fear that he might try to strangle her again. I was all the more sorry because I did not know how I could help her. I could not work in the office. I could not concentrate my mind on anything. I could not think at all. I kept on walking up and down the room. At this time Davis, the other clerk, came and gave me the cheque. He told me in joke that it would do me good to have a run with the cheque to the bank. He also said that I looked a little crazy that morning. As soon as the cheque came into my hand, somehow it occurred to me that I could get money to help her away from her cruel husband by simply altering the figures in the cheque. I thought of adding 'ty' to the word 'nine', and a zero to the figure of 9. This idea just came and flashed across my mind. I never thought of it again. Davis went away to his luncheon and I don't really remember how I reached the bank and pushed the cheque through the window to the cashier. All that I remember is that he asked me whether I wanted all notes. Then I became conscious what I had done. I came out of the bank and almost thought of flinging myself under a bus. I wished, I could throw the money. But I was extremely caught in the mess of the circumstances. I thought that I could at least save her. Consequently, I purchased two tickets and spent a little amount more. The rest of the balance I kept back. I have been constantly thinking ever since how I came to do such a thing. And it pained me very much to think that I could not undo it again.

*Frome.* How far is the bank from your office ?

*Falder.* It is not more than fifty yards, sir.



*Frome.* From the time Davis went out to lunch to the time you cashed the cheque, how long do you say it must have been ?

*Falder.* It couldn't have been four minutes, sir, because I ran all the way.

*Frome.* During those four minutes you say you remember nothing ?

*Falder.* No, sir ; only that I ran.

*Frome.* Not even adding the *ty* and the nought ?

*Falder.* No, sir. I don't really.

*(Frome sits down. and Cleaver rises.)*

*Cleaver.* But you remember running, do you ?

*Falder.* I was all out of breath when I got to the bank.

*Cleaver.* And you don't remember altering the cheque ?

*Falder.* *(Faintly)* No, sir.

*Cleaver.* Divested of the romantic glamour which my friend is casting over the case, is this anything but an ordinary forgery ? Come.

*Falder.* I was half frantic all that morning, sir.

*Cleaver.* Now, now ! You don't deny that the *ty* and the nought were so like the rest of the handwriting as to thoroughly deceive the cashier ?

*Falder.* It was an accident.

*Cleaver.* *(Cheerful)* Queer sort of accident, wasn't it ? On which day did you alter the counterfoil ?

*Falder.* *(Hanging his head)* On the Wednesday morning.

*Cleaver.* Was that an accident too ?

*Falder.* *(Faintly)* No.

*Cleaver.* To do that you had to watch your opportunity, I suppose ?

*Falder.* *(Almost inaudibly)* Yes.

*Cleaver.* You don't suggest that you were suffering under great excitement when you did that ?

*Falder.* I was haunted.

*Cleaver.* With the fear of being found out ?

*Falder.* *(Very low)* Yes.



*Frome.* From the time Davis gave you the cheque and went to lunch to the time when you cashed the cheque, how long you might have taken ?

*Falder.* I could not have taken more than four minutes because I ran all the way from the office to the bank.

*Frome.* Do you remember anything about those four minutes ?

*Falder.* No sir, I don't remember anything about those four minutes except that I ran fast.

*Frome.* Do you not remember even adding the 'y' and 'zero' to the words and figures in the cheque ?

*Falder.* No, sir, not really.

*Frome sits down and Cleaver rises.*

*Cleaver.* But you remember that you ran from the office to the bank ?

*Frome.* Yes, because I was out of breath when I reached the bank.

*Cleaver.* And you don't remember altering the words and figures in the cheque ?

*Falder.* No, sir, I don't remember that.

*Cleaver.* If we take away the veil of romantic glamour which my friend, Mr. Frome, is casting over the case, the whole case remains nothing but a simple case of forgery.

*Falder.* I was almost insane all that morning, sir.

*Cleaver.* Well, you don't deny that the 'ty' and the 'zero' were added to the words and figures in the cheque by you and in such a handwriting that even the cashier could not distinguish them from the original.

*Falder.* It was just by chance, sir.

*Cleaver.* It was, indeed, a very strange chance ! On which day did you make the corresponding alteration in the counterfoil of the cheque ?

*Falder.* It was on the Wednesday morning.

*Cleaver.* Was that also by chance ?

*Falder.* No, sir.

*Cleaver.* You had to wait for your opportunity to get a favourable chance to make that alteration ?

*Falder.* Yes, sir.

*Cleaver.* Do you suggest that you were under great agitation all the time that you did it ?

*Falder.* Yes, Sir. I was all the time frightened.

*Cleaver.* Were you afraid of being found out ?

*[Frome admits in a low voice.]*



*The Judge.* Didn't it occur to you that the only thing for you to do was to confess to your employers, and restore the money ?

*Falder.* I was afraid.

[*There is silence.*]

*Cleaver.* You desired, too, no doubt, to complete your design of taking this woman away ?

*Falder.* When I found I'd done a thing like that, to do it for nothing seemed so dreadful. I might just as well have chucked myself into the river.

*Cleaver.* You know that the clerk Davis was about to leave England—didn't it occur to you when you altered this cheque that suspicion would fall on him ?

*Falder.* It was all done in a moment. I thought of it afterwards.

*Cleaver.* Any that didn't lead you to avow what you'd done ?

*Falder.* [*Sullenly*] I meant to write when I got out there—I would have repaid the money.

*The Judge.* But in the meantime your innocent fellow-clerk might have been prosecuted.

*Falder.* I knew he was a long way off, your lordship. I thought there'd be time. I didn't think they'd find it out so soon.

*Frome.* I might remind your lordship that as Mr. Walter How had the cheque-book in his pocket till after Davis had sailed, if the discovery had been made only one day later Falder himself would have left, and suspicion would have attached to him, and not to Davis, from the beginning.

*The Judge.* The question is whether the prisoner knew that suspicion would light on himself, and not on Davis. [*To Falder sharply*]. Did you know that Mr. Walter How had the cheque-book till after Davis had sailed ?

*Falder.* I—I—thought—he—

*The Judge.* Now speak the truth—yes or no !

*Falder.* [*Very low*] No, my lord. I had no means of knowing.

*The Judge.* That disposes of your point, Mr. Frome.

[*Frome bows to the Judge.*]

*Cleaver.* Has any aberration of this nature ever attacked you before ?



*The Judge.* Did you not think then that the only course left for you under that hard situation was to make a confession to your employers and return the money ?

*Falder.* Yes, but I was so afraid that I could not make a confession.

*Cleaver.* Another reason why you could not make a confession probably was that you wanted to complete your plan of taking away this woman to South America.

*Falder.* When I felt that I had committed such a crime, I thought it all the more foolish not to carry out the plan for which the crime was committed. I was so insane that I might well have drowned myself in the river.

*Cleaver.* You knew that Davis was about to sail to the East. Did it not come to your head that if the forgery was detected it would be attributed to Davis ?

*Falder.* No sir, because it was all done in a moment. I thought of it afterwards when the whole thing had finished.

*Cleaver.* And even after that you could not make a confession of your crime.

*Falder.* My idea was to write to my employers when I reached South America. I had also decided to pay back the whole money.

*The Judge.* But in the meantime, it was quite possible that your poor innocent fellow clerk, Davis, might have been arrested and prosecuted on the charge of forgery which he never committed.

*Falder.* I knew that he was far off from homeland. I thought there would be time enough to inform before any action could be taken against him. I thought it would take some time before the forgery could be detected.

*Frome.* [To the Judge] I might be permitted to bring to your notice, my lord, that the cheque-book remained in the pocket of Mr. Walter till after Davis had sailed. Therefore, if the forgery had been discovered only a day after Falder had himself left, the suspicion would have gone to Falder and not to Davis.

*The Judge.* But the question is whether Falder knew that suspicion would fall on him and not on Davis.

[To Falder] Did you know that Mr. Walter had the cheque-book in his pocket till after Davis had sailed ?

*Falder.* I thought he had.

*The Judge.* Speak the truth and answer in 'yes' or 'no'.

*Falder.* No, my Lord, I had no means of knowing that Walter had the cheque-book in his pocket.

*The Judge.* That finishes your point, Mr. Frome.

*Cleaver.* Has this kind of mental excitement ever attacked you before ?



*Falder*, [*Faintly*] No, sir.

*Cleaver*. You had recovered sufficiently to go back to your work that afternoon ?

*Falder*. Yes, I had to take the money back.

*Cleaver*. You mean the *nine* pounds. Your wits were sufficiently keen for you to remember that ? And you still persist in saying you don't remember altering this cheque.

[*He sits down.*]

*Falder*. If I hadn't been mad I should never have had the courage.

*Frome*. [*Rising*] Did you have your lunch before going back ?

*Falder*. I never ate a thing all day ; and at night I couldn't sleep.

*Frome*. Now, as to the four minutes that elapsed between Davis's going out and your cashing the cheque : do you say that you recollect *nothing* during those four minutes ?

*Falder*. [*After a moment*] I remember thinking of Mr. Cokeson's face.

*Frome*. Of Mr. Cokeson's face ! Had that any connection with what you were doing ?

*Falder*. No, sir.

*Frome*. Was that in the office, before you ran out ?

*Falder*. Yes, and while I was running.

*Frome*. And that lasted till the cashier said : "Will you have notes ?"

*Falder*. Yes, and then I seemed to come to myself—and it was too late.

*Frome*. Thank you. That closes the evidence for the defence, my lord.

(*The Judge nods, and Falder goes back to his seat in the dock.*)

*Frome*. (*Gathering up notes*) If it pleases your Lordship—Members of the Jury,—My friend in cross-examination has shown a disposition to sneer at the defence which has been set up in this case, and I am free to admit that nothing I can say will move you, if the evidence has not already convinced you that the prisoner committed this act in a moment when to all practical intents and purposes he was not responsible for his actions ; of such mental and moral vacuity, arising from the violent emotional agitation under which he had been suffering, as to amount to temporary madness. My friend has alluded to the 'romantic glamour' with which I have sought to invest this case. Gentlemen, I have done nothing of the kind. I have merely shown you the background of "life"—that palpitating life which, believe me—whatever my friend may say—always lies behind the commission of a crime. Now, gentlemen, we live in a highly



*Falder.* No, sir.

*Cleaver.* You had recovered sufficiently to go back to your work that afternoon?

*Falder.* Yes, I had to take the money back to Davis.

*Cleaver.* You mean, you wanted to return nine pounds only and not ninety. You were quite well in your senses to remember that you had to return the money. How do you then persist on saying that you don't remember making any alterations in the cheque?

(*He sits down.*)

*Falder.* If I had not been out of senses, I could never have altered the cheque.

*Frome.* Did you have your lunch before going back?

*Falder.* I had not taken anything all the day, and at night I could not sleep.

*Frome.* During the four minutes when the cheque was handed to you and when you cashed it, do you still say that you remember nothing of these four minutes?

*Falder.* I remember that I was thinking of Mr. Cokeson's face.

*Frome.* You were thinking of Mr. Cokeson's face! Has that any connection with the incident?

*Falder.* No, sir.

*Frome.* Was that in the office, before you ran out?

*Falder.* Yes, and also while I was running.

*Frome.* And that idea lasted until the cashier said whether you wanted all notes.

*Falder.* Yes, and then I came to to my senses but then it was quite late.

*Frome.* Thank you. That finishes the evidence for the defence.

(*The Judge nods and Falder returns to his seat in the dock.*)

*Frome.* My Lord and members of the Jury! My friend, Mr. Cleaver, while cross-examining the prisoner expressed a contemptuous indignation at my plea for defence. Permit me to remark that whatever I may say myself will prove ineffectual if the evidence put before you has failed to prove that the convict was so irresistibly led by circumstances to commit the crime that he could not be held responsible for his own deed. He acted in a state of terrible mental distress and moral weakness, resulting from a powerful emotional disturbance, that amounted to a passing fit of insanity and madness. My learned friend, Mr. Cleaver alleged that I had tried to cast a veil of romantic glow on a simple story of pure forgery in order to mitigate the intensity of the crime. Gentlemen, I have attempted no such thing. I have only placed before you the background of life under which the crime was committed. You will agree, gentlemen, in spite of whatever Mr. Cleaver may say, that there is always some powerful force of life or circumstances that leads to the crime. We live in



civilized age, and the sight of brutal violence disturbs us in a very strange way, even when we have no personal interest in the matter. But when we see it inflicted on a woman whom we love—what then? Just think of what your own feelings would have been, each of you at the prisoner's age; and then look at him. Well! he is hardly the comfortable, shall we say bucolic person likely to contemplate with equanimity marks of gross violence on a woman to whom he was devotedly attached. Yes, gentlemen, look at him! He has not a strong face; but neither has he a vicious face. He is just the sort of man who would easily become the prey of his emotions. You have heard the description of his eyes. My friend may laugh at the word "funny"—I think it better describes the peculiar uncanny look of those who are strained to breaking-point than any other word which could have been used. I don't pretend, mind you, that mental irresponsibility was more than a flash of darkness, in which all sense of proportion became lost; but I do contend that, just as a man who destroys himself at such a moment may be, and often is, absolved from the stigma attaching to the crime of self-murder, so he may, and frequently does, commit other crimes while in this irresponsible condition, and that he may as justly be acquitted of criminal intent and treated as a patient. I admit that this is a plea which might well be abused. It is a matter for discretion. But here you have a case in which there is every reason to give the benefit of the doubt. You heard me ask the prisoner what he thought of during those four fatal minutes. What was his answer? "I thought of Mr. Cokeson's face?" Gentlemen, no man could invent an answer like that; it is absolutely stamped with truth. You have seen the great affection (legitimate or not) existing between him and this woman, who came here to give evidence for him at the risk of her life. It is impossible for you to doubt his distress on the morning when he committed this act. We well know that terrible havoc such distress can make in weak and highly nervous people. It was all the work of a moment. The rest has followed as death follows a stab to the heart, or water drops if you hold up a jug to empty it. Believe me, gentlemen, there is nothing more tragic in life than the utter impossibility of changing what you have done. Once this cheque was altered and presented, the work of four minutes—four mad minutes—the rest has been silence. But in those four minutes the boy before you has slipped through a door, hardly opened, into that great cage which never again



an age of highly refined sensibility and culture, in which physical violence in any form is repulsive to us even if we may have no personal interest in the matter. But the act of physical violence becomes absolutely intolerable when it is inflicted upon one's own beloved. Just imagine what your own feelings would have been, gentlemen, at the age of the convict. He is a young boy of 23, hardly sober and experienced enough to maintain his mental equilibrium at the sight of brutal violence inflicted on a woman so deeply loved by him. Look at him, gentlemen. He does not give the impression of being a hardened and experienced criminal, nor does his face bear the marks of vice or villainy. He is just the type of man who can be easily swayed by his sentiments and emotions. You have heard the description of his peculiar looks. Mr. Cleaver may laugh at the epithet 'funny' applied to his eyes. I think that this word best describes the peculiar unearthly looks of a person whose nerves are reacting to the breaking point under emotional distress. I don't suggest that his mental distress was more than a momentary passing of insanity, in which all sense of propriety and reason was lost. But I do assert that just as a man who commits suicide under such conditions is acquitted of all guilt and responsibility of the crime, under similar conditions Falder should be absolved of the guilt and treated as a patient of abnormal psychology and neurosis. I admit that this plea can sometimes be misapplied. It is a case for the discretion of the Judge and the Jury. But in this case the convict deserves to be given the benefit of doubt. You remember the prisoner's given reply to my question what he was thinking during those four critical minutes. He replied that he was thinking of Cokeson's face. This reply, gentlemen, could not have been invented by any man. It is marked with absolute truth. You have been given to understand what deep affection (whether moral or immoral, this is not our immediate concern) exists between the prisoner and the woman who just appeared as a witness at the very risk of her life. You cannot deny the great mental agony under which he committed the crime. We all know that emotional chaos can be caused in the mind and heart of a temperamentally weak and nervous person caught under such a situation. The crime was committed in a momentary fit of madness. Other things followed as naturally and irresistibly as death follows a serious wound in the heart, or as water flows out when a jug is held with its mouth downward. The most tragic irony of life, gentlemen, is that it is impossible to undo what has been once done. Once this cheque was changed and presented in the bank—all this was done in a frantic madness of four minutes only—all other things followed automatically. The work of these four fatal minutes has pushed the young lad into the narrow and dark cage of the law. The cage of the law is a dark trap in which once a man is caught, there is no escape for him. Once the primary act was committed, other things inevitably followed. His other acts, such as, his inability to confess his crime to his employers, the corresponding alteration in the counterfoil of the cheque, his preparation for going abroad with his lady-love are all a proof not of



quite lets a man go—the cage of the Law. His further acts, his failure to confess, the alteration of the counterfoil, his preparations for flight are all evidence—not of deliberate and guilty intention when he committed the prime act from which these subsequent acts arose ; no—they are merely evidence of the weak character which is clearly enough his misfortune. But is a man to be lost because he is bred and born with a weak character ? Gentlemen, men like the prisoner are destroyed daily under our law for want of that human insight which sees them as they are, patients, and not criminals. If the prisoner be found guilty, and treated as though he were a criminal type, he will, as all experience shows, in all probability become one. I beg you not to return a verdict that may thrust him back into prison and brand him for ever. Gentlemen, Justice is a machine that, when someone has once given it the starting push, rolls on of itself. Is this young man to be ground to pieces under this machine for an act which at the worst was one of weakness ? Is he to become a member of the luckless crews that man those dark, ill-starred ships called prisons ? Is that to be his voyage—from which so few return ? Or is he to have another chance, to be still looked on as one who has gone a little astray, but who will come back ? I urge you, gentlemen, do not ruin this young man ! For, as a result of those four minutes, ruin, utter and irretrievable, stares him in the face. He can be saved now. Imprison him as a criminal, and I affirm to you that he will be lost. He has neither the face nor the manner of one who can survive that terrible ordeal. Weigh in the scales his criminality and the suffering he has undergone. The latter is ten times heavier already. He has lain in prison under this charge for more than two months. Is he likely ever to forget that ? Imagine the anguish of his mind during that time. He has had his punishment, gentlemen, you may depend. The rolling of the chariot-wheels of Justice over this boy began when it was decided to prosecute him. We are now already at the second stage. If you permit it to go on to the third I would not give—that for him.

(He holds up finger and thumb in the form of a circle, drops his hand, and sits down.

(The jury stir, and consult each other's faces ; then they turn towards the counsel for the Crown, who rises, and, fixing his eyes on a spot that seems to give him satisfaction, slides them every now and then towards the jury.



his guilty conscience or criminal intention, but of his weak and sentimental character. And this weakness is the primary cause of all his misfortunes. But will it be justified to damn a man eternally for the simple reason that he is a man of weak spirits. Gentlemen, poor innocent men of weak temperament like Falder are victimised everyday for want of human insight in your judicial procedure. Our law sees them not as patients of abnormal psychology but as criminals. If this prisoner, who is, in fact, a patient rather than a criminal, is treated as a confirmed criminal and imprisoned as such, he will most probably, as our experience tells us, grow into a callous criminal in the end. I, therefore, appeal to you not to pass on him the verdict of guilty and thereby send him to the prison, and damn him for ever. Gentlemen, our judicial system is a soulless mechanical device which, once it is set operating, will automatically keep on rolling for ever and crush the helpless victim under it. This young man is going to be crushed into powder under the heartless and soulless mechanism of law for a single act of indiscretion committed in a fit of emotional weakness amounting to insanity. Are you going to push him aboard the luckless boat of the prison to join the crew of the unfortunate victims there? Is he to be transported to that dark island of the prison from where hardly ever a victim returns to normal life. Will you not give him another chance? Is he not a young man who has drifted from the path of morality in a fit of excitement and who will come back to normal moral life? I appeal to you, gentlemen, not to damn him for ever. As a result of a single action committed within four minutes of nervous excitement, he is threatened by absolute and irremediable ruin. But he can be saved. If you send him to prison as a criminal, he will be damned for life. He is a man of weak temperament and cannot, therefore, endure the hard ordeal of imprisonment. Compare his crime with the suffering that he has already endured in the prison during his trial. His punishment has already been ten times more severe than his crime. He has already passed more than two months in the prison. Will he ever forget the mental agony of these two months? Imagine his mental distress during these two months of trial. He has already had his sufficient punishment. The soulless wheels of the mechanism of legal justice started rolling over this unfortunate young man from the moment it was decided by his employers to prosecute him. The second stage of his prosecution and trial has already come. If you now let the tragedy proceed on the third stage, it will be the utter ruin of the unfortunate young man.

(He makes a kind of cricle with his forefinger and thumb, then drops his hand and sits down.

(There is a movement among the members of the Jury, and they consult each other. Then they turn towards the Counsel for the Crown, who rises, fixes his gaze at an angle, and then surveys the members of the Jury with his glances.



*Cleaver.* May it please your Lordship. (*Rising on his toes*) Gentlemen of the Jury,—The facts in this case are not disputed and the defence, if my friend will allow me to say so, is so thin that I don't propose to waste the time of the Court by taking you over the evidence. The plea is one of temporary insanity. Well, gentlemen, I dare say it is clearer to me than it is to you why this rather—what shall we call it?—bizarre defence has been set up. The alternative would have been to plead guilty. Now, gentlemen, if the prisoner had pleaded guilty my friend would have had to rely on a simple appeal to his lordship. Instead of that, he has gone into the byways and hedges and found this—er—peculiar plea, which has enabled him to show you the proverbial woman, to put her in the box—to give, in fact, a romantic glow to this affair. I compliment my friend; I think it highly ingenious of him. By these means, he has—to a certain extent—got round the Law. He has brought the whole story of motive and stress out in court, at first hand, in a way that he would not otherwise have been able to do. But when you have once grasped that fact, gentlemen, you have grasped everything. (*With good humoured contempt*) For look at this plea of insanity; we can't put it lower than that. You have heard the woman. She has every reason to favour the prisoner, but what did she say? She said that the prisoner was *not* insane when she left him in the morning. If he were going out of his mind through distress, that was obviously the moment when insanity would have shown itself. You have heard the managing clerk, another witness for the defence. With some difficulty I elicited from him the admission that the prisoner, though jumpy (a word that he seemed to think you would understand, gentlemen, and I am sure I hope you do), was *not* mad when the cheque was handed to Davis. I agree with my friend that it's unfortunate that we have not got Davis here, but the prisoner has told you the words with which Davis in turn handed him the cheque: he obviously, therefore, was *not* mad when he received it, or he would not have remembered those words. The cashier has told you that he was certainly in his senses when he cashed it. We have therefore the plea that man who is sane at ten minutes past one, and sane at fifteen minutes past, may, for the purposes of avoiding the consequences of a crime, call himself insane between those points of time. Really, gentlemen, this is so peculiar a proposition that I am not disposed to weary you with further argument. You will form your own opinion of its value. My friend has adopted this way of saying a great deal to you—and very eloquently—on the score of youth temptation, and the like. I might point out, however, that the offence with which the prisoner is charged is one of the most serious known to our law; and there are certain features in this case, such as, the suspicion which he allowed to rest on his innocent fellow-clerk, and his relations with this married woman, which will render it difficult for you to attach too much importance to such pleading. I ask you, in short, gentlemen, for that verdict of guilty which, in the circumstances, I regard you as, unfortunately, bound to render.

(*Leaving his chair, and travelling from Judge and the Jury to Frome, he sits down.*)



*Cleaver.* Your Lordship and Gentlemen of the Jury ! The charge of forgery has been admitted by the Counsel for the defence and has not been disputed, and the plea for the defence is so weak that I shall not like to waste the time of the court by summarizing the evidence. The plea of defence is that the convict committed the crime in a fit of temporary madness. Well, gentlemen, I have clearly understood why this peculiar plea for defence has been set up. There was no other alternative except to plead guilty. If the convict had pleaded guilty, the only course left for the defence would have been to proffer mercy appeal. Instead of placing a direct mercy appeal, the defence has drifted into by-paths and circuitous lanes to be able to produce in the court for a witness a conventional love-lorn heroine, and thereby to throw a veil of romantic glamour around a simple case of forgery. I congratulate Mr. Frome for very intelligent way in which he has put up the case. He has almost won over the law. He has very successfully invented a story of motive and effect in a very ingenious way. But when you have understood this central fact, gentlemen, the whole case will be clear to you. Also consider his defence on the basis of insanity. This too cannot be ignored. You have heard the plea of the woman witness. She must naturally defend the prisoner, yet what did she say ? She clearly said that the prisoner was not mad when she parted from him on the morning of the commission of the crime. If he were to go insane under the impact of this mental distress, he should have gone so at the very moment. You have also heard the evidence of Mr. Cokeson, the managing clerk. It was with some difficulty that I could extract from him the acknowledgement that the prisoner was not mad when the cheque was handed over to him. He described him as "Jumpy" and I believe you understand the suggestion of this word. It is true that Davis is away and cannot, therefore, be produced in the court. But the prisoner has told you the words that Davis spoke to him while handing over the cheque to him. This itself is a proof that the prisoner was not mad at that time, otherwise he would not have remembered his words. The Cashier also says that the prisoner was quite in his senses when he handed him the cash. Therefore, he was well in his senses at ten minutes past one and again at fifteen minutes past one. He calls himself insane within these two points of time in order to absolve himself of the consequences of his crime. This, gentlemen, is such a clear case that I shall not like to weary you with more arguments. You have to make your own impression of the whole situation. My friend, Mr. Frome, has put up a very spirited and eloquent defence in the name of love, youth and emotional weakness. However, the fact remains that the prisoner is charged with forgery, which is one of the most serious crimes known in law. In addition to this nature of crime, there are also a few other circumstances that intensify his guilt, such as, his clever trick of passing on his crime to the head of a fellow-clerk and his illicit love-affair with a married woman. These considerations will make it difficult for you, gentlemen, to give too much weight to the sentimental plea for defence. I, therefore, ask you, gentlemen, to pass on him the verdict of guilty, for, unfortunately, there is no other option left for you.



*The Judge.* (*Bending a little towards the jury, and speaking in a business-like voice.*) Members of the Jury, you have heard the evidence, and the comments on it. My only business is to make clear to you the issues you have to try. The facts are admitted so far as the alteration of this cheque and counterfoil by the prisoner. The defence set up is that he was not in a responsible condition when he committed the crime. Well, you have heard the prisoner's story, and the evidence of the other witnesses—so far as it bears on the point of insanity. If you think that what you have heard establishes the fact that the prisoner was insane at the time of the forgery, you will find him guilty but insane. If, on the other hand, you conclude from what you have seen and heard that the prisoner was sane—and nothing short of insanity will count—you will find him guilty. In reviewing the testimony as to his mental condition you must bear in mind very carefully the evidence as to his demeanour and conduct both before and after the act of forgery—the evidence of the prisoner himself, of the woman, of the witness—er—Cokeson, and—er—of the cashier. And in regard to that I especially direct your attention to the prisoner's admission that the idea of adding the *ty* and the nought did come into his mind at the moment when the cheque was handed to him; and also to the alteration of the counterfoil, and to his subsequent conduct generally. The bearing of all this on the question of premeditation (and premeditation will imply sanity) is very obvious. You must not allow any considerations of age or temptation to weigh with you in the finding of your verdict. Before you can come to a verdict guilty but insane; you must be well and thoroughly convinced that the condition of his mind was such as would have qualified him at the moment for a lunatic asylum. (*He pauses; then, seeing that the jury are doubtful whether to retire or not, adds :*) You may retire, gentlemen, if you wish to do so.

(The jury retire by a door behind the *Judge*. The *Judge* bends over his notes. *Falder*, leaning from the dock, speaks excitedly to his solicitor, pointing down at *Ruth*. The solicitor, in turn speaks to *Frome*.)

*Frome.* (*Rising*) My lord. The prisoner is very anxious that I should ask you if your lordship would kindly request the reporters not to disclose the name of the woman witness in the Press reports of these proceedings. Your lordship will understand that the consequences might be extremely serious to her.

*The Judge.* (*Pointedly—with the suspicion of a smile*) Well, Mr. *Frome*, you deliberately took this course which involved bringing her here.

*Frome.* (*With an ironic bow*) If your lordship thinks I could have brought out the full facts in any other way?

*The Judge.* H'm ! Well.

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*Frome.* There is very real danger to her, your lordship.



*The Judge.* Members of the Jury, you have heard the plea for defence and Mr. Frome's appraisal of it. It is my business to suggest to you the points that you have to take into special consideration. The fact of the case, so far as the alterations in the cheque and in the counterfoil are concerned have been admitted by the defence. The plea for defence is that the crime was committed under such compelling and insinuating circumstances that the prisoner was not quite responsible for his deed. You have heard the story of the prisoner and the evidence of the witness with regard to the plea of insanity. If you feel convinced under the circumstances that the prisoner was insane at the time of the commission of the crime you will pass the verdict of guilty but insane. If, on the other hand, you feel that the prisoner was well in his senses, you will return the verdict of guilty. While you consider the evidence regarding his mental condition, you should keep in mind the description of his facial features and his bearing on the day of the commission of the crime. You should carefully consider the evidence of the prisoner himself, and of the witnesses including the woman, the Cashier and Mr. Cokeson, the managing clerk. I specially draw your attention to the prisoner's statement that the idea of adding 'ty' to the words and 'zero' to the figure in the cheque suddenly occurred to him as soon as the cheque was handed over to him. You should also carefully keep in mind the fact that the counterfoil was altered subsequently. These facts suggest that the crime was well-planned, and this implies sanity on the part of the prisoner. You should not give any concession to the prisoner on the basis of his age or his emotional weakness. If you return the verdict of guilty but insane, you should satisfy yourself that it was a fit case for admission to the lunatic asylum. You can now retire, gentlemen, and decide the issue.

(The Judge pauses, and then seeing that the jury were undecided whether to go out or not, adds : "You may retire, gentlemen, if you wish to do so.")

(The Jury retire through a door on the back of the Judge. The Judge reads his notes. Falder, leaning out from the witness-box, speaks to his counsel regarding Ruth. The solicitor speaks to Frome.)

*Frome.* (Rising) My Lord, the prisoner is very anxious to ask you that your lordship might kindly request the press reporters not to publish the name of the woman witness. Your Lordship will appreciate that the disclosure of her name may lead to serious consequences to her.

*The Judge.* But Mr. Frome, you purposely produced her as a witness.

*Frome.* Your Lordship will agree that the full facts of the case could not be brought out without bringing her in.

*The Judge.* Well, alright.

*Frome.* There is indeed great danger for her.



*The Judge.* You see, I have to take your word for all that.

*Frome.* If your lordship would be so kind. I can assure your lordship that I am not exaggerating.

*The Judge.* It goes very much against the grain with me that the name of a witness should ever be suppressed. [*With a glance at Falder, who is gripping and clasping his hands before him and then at Ruth who is sitting perfectly rigid with her eyes fixed on Falder*]. I'll consider your application. It must depend. I have to remember that she may have come her to commit perjury on the prisoner's behalf.

*Frome.* Your lordship, I really——

*The Judge.* Yes, yes—I don't suggest anything of the sort, Mr. Frome. Leave it at that for the moment.

*(As he finishes speaking, the jury return, and file back into the box.*

*Clerk of Assize.* Members of the Jury, are you agreed on your verdict?

*Foreman.* We are.

*Clerk of Assize.* Is it Guilty, or Guilty but insane?

*Foreman.* Guilty.

*(The Judge nods ; then, gathering up his notes, he looks at Falder, who sits motionless.*

*Frome.* (*Rising*) If your lordship would allow me to address you in mitigation of sentence. I don't know if your lordship thinks I can add anything to what I have said to the jury on the score of the prisoner's youth, and the great stress under which he acted.

*The Judge.* I don't think you can, Mr. Frome.

*Frome.* If your lordship says so—I do most earnestly beg your lordship to give the utmost weight to my plea. (*He sits down.*

*The Judge.* (*To the Clerk*) Call upon him.

*The Clerk.* Prisoner at the bar, you stand convicted of felony. Have you anything to say for yourself why the Court should not give you judgment according to Law? (*Falder shakes his head.*

*The Judge.* William Falder, you have been given fair trial and found guilty, in my opinion rightly found guilty, of forgery. (*He pauses ; then, consulting his notes, goes on*). The defence was set up that you were not responsible for your actions at the moment of committing the crime. There is no doubt, I think, that this was a device to bring out at first hand the nature of the temptation to which you succumbed. For throughout the trial your counsel was in reality making an appeal for mercy. The setting up of this defence of course enabled him to put in some evidence that might weigh in that direction. Whether he was well advised to do so is another matter. He claimed that you should be treated rather as a patient than as a criminal. And this plea of his, which in the end amounted to a passio-



*The Judge.* Well, for this I have taken your word.

*Frome.* I can assure your Lordship that I am not exaggerating things.

*The Judge.* It is against my nature that I should suppress the name of a witness. Still, I shall consider your application. I shall have to consider whether she did not come to influence the fair trial of the prisoner.

(The judge throws a glance at Falder, who is clasping his hands before him, and then towards Ruth, who sits rigidly with her eyes fixed on Falder.

*Frome.* Does your Lordship really believe that it is so ?

*The Judge.* No, I don't actually suggest this. But leave the matter for the moment.

*The Judge.* William Falder, you have been given fair trial and (As the judge finishes speaking, the members of the Jury return and pass on to their seats.

*Clerk.* Members of the Jury, have you arrived at your judgement.

*Foreman.* Yes.

*Clerk.* It is Guilty, or Guilty but insane ?

*Foreman.* Guilty.

(The judge bows his head, and then collects his papers and looks at Falder who sits motionless.

*Frome.* I appeal to your Lordship to allow me to put in a word for mitigating the punishment. I don't know if I can say anything new on the basis of the prisoner's youth and the great temptation under which he acted.

*The Judge.* Yes, I don't think you can say anything new.

*Frome.* In that case, I most emphatically request your Lordship to give utmost concession on the score of my plea.

*The Judge.* Call upon the prisoner.

*The Clerk.* The prisoner behind the bars, you are found guilty of forgery. Do you have anything more to say in your defence why you should not be awarded punishment according to law ?

(Falder shakes his head.

*The Judge.* William Falder, you have been given fair trial and found guilty by the Jury. I also hold that the verdict of guilty returned on you is right. The plea for defence in your favour was that you were not quite responsible for the crime under the circumstances in which you acted. This was calculated to bring out the full force of the temptation to which you yielded. Throughout the trial your counsel was actually making an appeal for mercy. He succeeded, of course, in producing some evidence to influence in that direction. Whether your counsel acted wisely in putting up this plea



nate appeal. he based in effect on an indictment of the march of Justice, which he practically accused of confirming and completing the process of criminality. Now, in considering how far I should allow weight to his appeal, I have a number of factors to take into account. I have to consider on the one hand the grave nature of your offence, the deliberate way in which you subsequently altered the counterfoil, the danger you caused to an innocent man—and that, to my mind, is a very grave point—and finally I have to consider the necessity of deterring others from following your example. On the other hand, I bear in mind that you are young, that you have hitherto borne a good character, that you were, if I am to believe your evidence and that of your witnesses, in a state of some emotional excitement when you committed this crime. I have every wish, consistent with my duty—not only to you, but to the community, to treat you with leniency. And this brings me to what are the determining factors in my mind in my consideration of your case. You are a clerk in a lawyer's office—that is a very serious aggravation in this case ; no possible excuse can be made for you on the ground that you were not fully conversant with the nature of the crime you were committing and the penalties that attach to it. It is said, however, that you were carried away by your emotions. The story has been told here to-day of your relations with this—er—Mrs. Honeywill ; on that story both the defence and the plea for mercy were in effect based. Now what is that story ? Is it that you, a young man, and she a young woman unhappily married, had formed an attachment, which you both say—with what truth I am unable to gauge had not yet resulted in immoral relations but which you both admit was about to result in such relationship. Your counsel has made an attempt to palliate this, on the ground that the woman is in what he describes, I think, as “a hopeless position”. As to that I can express no opinion. She is a married woman, and the fact is patent that you committed this crime with the view of furthering an immoral design. Now, however, I might wish, I am not able to justify to my conscience a plea for mercy which has a basis inimical to morality. It is vitiated *ab initio*. Your counsel has made an attempt also to show that to punish you with further imprisonment would be unjust. I do not follow him in these flights. *The Law is what it is*—a majestic edifice, sheltering all of us, each stone of which rests on another. I am concerned only with its administration. The crime you have committed is a very serious one. I cannot feel it in accordance with my duty to society to exercise the powers I have in your favour. You will go to penal servitude for three years.

(*Falder*, who throughout the *Judge's* speech has looked at him steadily, lets his head fall forward on his breast. *Ruth* starts up from her seat as he is taken out by the warders. There is a bustle in court.



for defence is a different question. Your counsel pleaded that you were to be treated as a patient of abnormal psychology rather than a criminal. He put up his plea in the form of an eloquent and moving appeal. In the course of his plea, he arraigned the entire system of justice as a soulless process insinuating and completing the cycle of criminality. In considering his plea, I have to take into consideration several factors. In the first place, I have to consider that you have committed a very serious crime, and then you deliberately altered the counterfoil subsequently, and also tried to pass on your crime on the other hand on a fellow clerk—and that is a serious point—and finally, I have to prevent others from acting like you by giving exemplary punishment to you. On the other hand, I have also taken into consideration that you are young and that you have before now borne a good character, and finally that you acted in a state of acute mental distress. I very much wish, in conformity with my duty towards you and the society, to treat you with utmost leniency. Therefore, in assessing your case, I have taken into consideration the following points. You are a clerk in a lawyer's office and this very much aggravated your crime, because employed in a lawyer's office you should have fully known the consequences of the deed that you were doing. It is argued, however, that you were swayed by powerful emotions. The story of your attachment with Mrs. Honeywill was related and on this love-affair, your plea for defence as well as for mercy was based. It was said that you are an emotional young man, and she, unhappily married woman, passionately loved each other, and if your statement were correct, you have had no immoral sexual relationship so far, but both of you admit that you were very soon going to have physical relationship. Your counsel sought to mitigate your responsibility in this case on the plea that the woman you loved was in a hopeless condition. I have nothing to say in this connection. But the fact remains that she is a married woman and you committed forgery for executing an immoral plan of elopement with her. With all my wish, therefore, I could not admit the appeal for mercy because it was based on an immoral design. It was immoral from the very beginning. Your counsel also said it would be unjust to send you to another term of imprisonment because you have already been in the prison for two months during your trial. I do not agree with his imaginative and sentimental argument. The Law has to be accepted as it is. The Law is a huge magnificent structure which protects all alike, and which like a palace, is built symmetrically, placing one edict over another. My duty is to administer it in the society. The crime of forgery that you have committed is very serious; keeping the interests of the society in my view, I cannot exercise my powers in favour of you. Therefore, I sentence you to three years of rigorous imprisonment.

[Falter, who had been looking steadily at the face of the Judge while he was speaking, now lowers down his head. Ruth starts up from her seat as Falter is taken away by the warder. There is a move against the court.



*The Judge.* (*Speaking to the reporters*) Gentlemen of the Press, I think that the name of the female witness should not be reported.

*(The reporters bow their acquiescence.*

*The Judge.* (*To Ruth, who is staring in the direction in which Falder has disappeared*) Do you understand, your name will not be mentioned ?

*Cokeson.* (*Pulling her sleeve*) The judge is speaking to you.

*(Ruth turns, stares at the Judge, and turns away.*

*The Judge.* I shall sit rather late to-day. Call the next case.

*Clerk of Assize.* (*To a warder*) Put up John Booley.

*(To cries of "Witnesses in the case of Booley".*

*The curtain falls.*



*The Judge.* Press reporters will kindly note that the name of the woman witness should not appear in the Press.

*The Judge.* [*To Ruth, who is looking in the direction in which Falder has disappeared.*] Do you understand that your name will not be reported ?

*Cokeson.* (*To Ruth.*) The Judge is speaking to you.

[*Ruth turns, looks at the Judge and turns away.*]

*The Judge.* I shall sit longer today. Call the next case.

*Clerk.* (*To an orderly.*) Call in John Booley.

[*Cries of the call heard outside.*]

[*The curtain falls.*]



ACT III

SCENE I

[A prison. A plainly furnished room, with two large barred windows, overlooking the prisoners' exercise yard, where men, in yellow clothes marked with arrows, and yellow brimless caps are seen in single file at a distance of four yards from each other walking rapidly on serpentine white lines marked on the concrete floor of the yard. Two warders in blue uniforms, with peaked caps and swords, are stationed amongst them. The room has distempered walls, a bookcase with numerous official looking books, a cupboard between the windows, a plan of the prison on the wall, a writing-table covered with documents. It is Christmas Eve.

[*The Governor*, a neat, grave-looking man with a trim, fair moustache, the eyes of a theorist, and grizzled hair, receding from the temples, is standing close to this writing-table looking at a sort of rough saw made out of a piece of metal. The hand in which he holds it is gloved, for two fingers are missing. The chief warder, *Wooder*, a tall, thin, military-looking man of sixty with grey moustache, and melancholy, monkey-like eyes, stands very upright two paces from him.

*The Governor*. (*With a faint, abstracted smile*) Queer-looking affair, Mr. Wooder ! Where did you find it ?

*Wooder*. In his mattress, sir. Haven't come across such a thing for two years now.

*The Governor*. (*With curiosity*) Had he any set plan ?

*Wooder*. He'd sawed his window-bar about that much. (*He holds up his thumb and finger a quarter of an inch apart.*)

*The Governor*. I'll see him this afternoon. What's his name ? Moaney ! An old hand, I think ?

*Wooder*. Yes, sir—fourth spell of penal. You'd think an old lag like him would have had more sense by now. (*With Pitying contempt.*) Occupied his mind, he said. Breaking in and breaking out—that's all they think about.

*The Governor*. Who's next him ?

*Wooder*. O'Cleary, sir.

*The Governor*. The Irishman.

*Wooder*. Next to him again there's that young fellow, Falder—star class—and next him old Clipton.



ACT III

SCENE I

(A prison. A small simple room, with two large barred windows, overlooking the open exercise yard, where prisoners in yellow striped trousers and brimless caps are seen walking briskly in small rows at a distance of four yards from each other. Two warders in blue uniforms, with high caps and open swords stand on watch near them. The room has distempered walls, with a book-case having government files in it. There is a cupboard between the windows, a plan of the prison on the wall, and a writing-table. It is Christmas Eve.

(The Governor is a smart neatly dressed and well-combed serious-looking man. His looks are philosopher-like. He has grizzled hair. Standing by his table he is looking at a small saw made of some metal. He is holding the saw in a glove-hand because two fingers are missing. The chief warder, Wooder, is a tall, military-like man of sixty. His moustaches are grey, and his looks clever and melancholy. He stands upright, about two steps from the Governor.

*The Governor.* (Holding a little saw in his hand.) Very strange thing, Mr. Wooder! Where did you find it?

*Wooder.* It was under his mattress, sir. I have never seen such a little thing for these two years.

*The Governor.* Did he have any plan?

*Wooder.* He had cut the window bar about a quarter of an inch.

*The Governor.* I will meet him this afternoon. What is his name? I believe it is Moaney. He is an old experienced convict, I presume. Isn't he?

*Wooder.* Yes, sir. It is his fourth term of imprisonment. You would think, sir, that an experienced man like him should have a better sense. He said that he occupied his mind by making a saw. These convicts always think of only one thing—how to break in and how to break out.

*The Governor.* Who is the next convict after him?

*Wooder.* There is one, O'Cleary.

*The Governor.* The Irishman, you mean?

*Wooder.* After him, there is a young fellow, Falder. He belongs to the star class. After him there is old Clipton.



*The Governor.* Ah, yes ! "The philosopher." I want to see him about his eyes.

*Wooder.* Curious thing, sir ; they seem to know when there's one of these tries at escape going on. It makes them restive—there's a regular wave going through them just now.

*The Governor.* (*Meditatively*) Odd things—those waves. (*Turning to look at the prisoners exercising*) Seem quite enough out here !

*Wooder.* That Irishman, O'Cleary, began banging on his door this morning, Little thing like that's quite enough to upset the whole lot. They're just like dumb animals at times.

*The Governor.* I've seen it with horses before thunder—it'll run right through cavalry lines.

(The prison *Chaplain*, has entered. He is a dark-haired, ascetic man, in clerical undress, with a peculiarly steady, tight-lipped face and slow, cultured speech.

*The Governor.* (*Holding up the saw*) Seen this, Miller ?

*The Chaplain.* Useful-looking specimen.

*The Governor.* Do for the Museum, eh ! (*He goes to the cupboard and opens it, displaying to view a number of quaint ropes, hooks, and metal tools with labels tied on them.*) That'll do, thanks, Mr. Wooder.

*Wooder.* (*Saluting*) Thank You, sir. (*He goes out*)

*The Governor.* Account for the state of the men last day or two, Miller ? Seems going through the whole place.

*The Chaplain.* No, I don't know of anything.

*The Governor.* By the way, will you dine with us tomorrow ?

*The Chaplain.* Christmas Day ? Thanks very much.

*The Governor.* Worries me to feel the men discontented. (*Gazing at the saw*). Have to punish this poor devil. Can't help liking a man who tries to escape.

[He places the saw in his pocket and locks the cupboard again.

*The Chaplain.* Extraordinary perverted will-power—some of them. Nothing to be done till it's broken.

*The Governor.* And not much afterwards. I'm afraid. Ground too hard for golf ?

(*Wooder comes in again.*  
*Wooder.* Visitor to speak to you, sir. I told him it wasn't usual.



*The Governor.* Yes, the philosopher, you mean? I want to see him about his eyes.

*Wooder.* His eyes are strange indeed. They seem to be searching if there is any convict trying to escape from the prison. He is always a little restless. It appears as if a regular stream of restlessness flows through him.

*The Governor.* Strange thing indeed—the waves of restlessness. I presume it is all quite enough out there in the barracks.

*Wooder.* O'Cleary, the old Irishman started beating at his door this morning. All the convicts were greatly agitated by this little thing. They are all like a herd of dumb animals.

*The Governor.* Yes the horses also react like this at the sound of thunder. The sound of thunder causes such a great commotion among the horses in the military.

*The Prison Chaplain has entered. He is a dark-haired, ascetic man in clerical dress. His face is graceful and impressive and he is soft-spoken and cultured.*

*The Governor.* (Holding up the saw.) Have you seen this, Miller?

*The Chaplain.* Seems to be a fine thing.

*The Governor.* It will do well for the museum. It's enough, thanks, Mr. Wooder.

*The Governor goes to the cupboard and opens it, and brings to view a number of odd looking hooks, tools, ropes, etc.*

*Wooder.* Thank you, sir.

*The Governor.* What is your report about the convicts for the last two days, Mr. Miller? It appeared that the infection spread through the whole place.

*The Chaplain.* No, I don't have any knowledge.

*The Governor.* Well, will you have your dinner with us tomorrow?

*The Chaplain.* Christmas Day? Thanks, very much.

*The Governor.* I am worried to know that the convicts are getting discontented. I shall have to punish the poor convicts who made this little saw. I can't help liking a man who tries to run away from the prison.

*The Chaplain.* Yes, some of them possess extraordinary will power directed into wrong channels. Nothing can be done until it is broken.

*The Governor.* I feel nothing can be done even afterwards. The ground is too hard to play upon.

(Wooder comes in again.)

*Wooder.* Sir, there is a visitor who wants to speak to you. I told him that it was irregular for him to come like that.



*The Governor.* What about ?

*Wooder.* Shall I put him off, sir ?

*The Governor.* (*Resignedly*) No, no. Let's see him. Don't go, Miller.

(*Wooder motions to some one without, and as the visitor comes in, withdraws.*)

[*The visitor is Cokeson, who is attired in a thick over-coat to the knees, woollen gloves and carries a top hat.*]

*Cokeson.* I'm sorry to trouble you. But it's about a young man you've get here.

*The Governor.* We have a good many.

*Cokeson.* Name of Falder, forgery. (*Producing a card, and handing it to the Governor.*) Firm of James and Walter How. Well known in the law.

*The Governor.* (*Receiving the card—with a faint smile.*) What do you want to see me about, sir ?

*Cokeson.* (*Suddenly seeing the prisoners at exercise*) Why ! what a sight !

*The Governor.* Yes, we have that privilege from here ; my office is being done up. [*Sitting down at his table.*] Now please !

*Cokeson.* (*Dragging his eyes with difficulty from the window.*) I wanted to say a word to you ; I shan't keep you long. (*Confidentially*) Fact is, I oughtn't to be here by rights. His sister came to me—he's got no father and mother—and she was in some distress. "My husband won't let me go and see him," she said ; "says he's disgraced the family. And his other sister," she said, "is an invalid." And she asked me to come. Well, I take an interest in him. He was our junior—I go to the same chapel—and I didn't like to refuse.

*The Governor.* I'm afraid he's not allowed a visitor yet—he's only here for his one month's separate confinement.

*Cokeson.* You see, I saw him while he was shut up waiting for his trial and he was lonely.

*The Governor.* (*With faint amusement*) Ring the bell would you, Miller. (*To Cokeson.*) You'd like to hear what the doctor says about him, perhaps.

*The Chaplain.* (*Ring the bell*) You are not accustomed to prisons, it would seem, sir.

*Cokeson.* No. But it's a pitiful sight. He's quite a young fellow. I said to him : "Be patient," I said. "Patient !" he said. "A day," he said, "shut up in your cell thinking and brooding as I do, it's longer than a year outside, I can't help it," he said ; "I try—but I'm built that way, Mr. Cokeson." And he held his hand up to his face. I could see the tears trickling through his fingers. It wasn't nice.



*The Governor.* What for does he want to come ?

*Wooder.* Should I ask him to go away, sir ?

*The Governor.* No, no, let him come in. You also stay with me, Miller.

*(Wooder calls someone by waving his hand.)*

*(The man called by Wooder is Cokeson. He is wearing a thick long overcoat, a top hat and woollen gloves.)*

*Cokeson.* I am sorry to have given you trouble, sir. I came about a young man whom you have in the prison.

*The Governor.* Yes, we have a good many of them.

*Cokeson.* His name is Falder. He is case of forgery. He committed forgery in the well-known firm of James and Walter How.

*The Governor.* What have you to say to me, sir, in this connection ?

*Cokeson.* *(Seeing the prisoners at exercise).* Why ! What a curious sight !

*The Governor.* Yes, we can see them at exercise from here. My office is being repaired. Will you now tell me your purpose, please ?

*Cokeson.* I wanted to say just a word to you. I shall not keep you long. The fact is that I should have no right to come to you here. But Falder's sister came and she was in some difficulty. Falder has got no father and mother. His sister said that her husband did not allow her to go and see Falder. Her husband said that Falder had brought disgrace and dishonour to the whole family. His other sister is a chronic patient. She asked me to come and enquire about Falder. I myself have an interest in him. He was junior clerk in my office. He belongs to my Sect of *Christianity*. Under these circumstances I did not think it advisable to refuse her.

*The Governor.* I am sorry Falder is not allowed a visitor yet. He has been here just for a month for his solitary confinement.

*Cokeson.* I would like to tell you, sir, that I saw him once in solitary confinement when he was being tried for the case.

*The Governor.* *(To Miller.)* Will you please ring the bell ? *(To Cokeson)* Perhaps you would like to hear what the doctor says about him.

*The Chaplain.* You are not accustomed to prisons, I believe, sir.

*Cokeson.* No, but it is a pitiful scene. Falder is a young fellow. I advised him to be patient. He wondered how he could be patient in a small cell of the prison all alone. A single day in solitary confinement, he said appeared longer than a year outside. He said that he could not help being impatient and sad. He further said that he tried his best to keep himself composed but he couldn't. With these words he hid his face behind his hands. I could see tears flowing down from his eyes. It was a pitiful sight indeed.



*The Chaplain.* He's a young man with rather peculiar eyes, isn't he ? Not Church of England, I think ?

*Cokeson.* No.

*The Chaplain.* I know.

*The Governor.* (To *Wooder*, who has come in) Ask the doctor to be good enough to come here for a minute. (*Wooder salutes and goes out.*) Let's see, he's not married ?

*Cokeson.* No. (*Confidentially*) But there's a party he's very much attached to, not altogether *com-il-fo*. It's a sad story.

*The Chaplain.* If it wasn't for drink and women, sir this prison might be closed.

*Cokeson.* (*Looking at the Chaplain over his spectacles*) Ye-es, but I wanted to tell you about that, special. It preys on his mind.

*The Governor.* Well !

*Cokeson.* Like this. The woman had a nahsty, spiteful feller for a husband, and she'd left him. Fact is, she was going away with our young friend. It's not nice—but I've looked over it. Well after the trial she said she'd earn her living apart, and wait for him to come out. That was a great consolation to him. But after a month she came to me—I *don't* know her personally—and she said : "I can't earn the children's living let alone my own—I've got no friends. I'm obliged to keep out of everybody's way, else my husband get to know where I was. I'm very much reduced," she said. And she has lost flesh. "I'll have to go in the workhouse !" It's a painful story. I said to her : "No," I said, "not that ! I've got a wife an' family, but sooner than you should do that I'll spare you a little my self." "Really," she said—she's a nice creature—"I don't like to take it from you. I think I'd better go back to my husband." Well, I know he's a nahsty, spiteful feller—drinks—but I didn't like to persuade her not to.

*The Chaplain.* Surely, no.

*Cokeson.* Ye-es, but I'm sorry now. He's got his three years to serve. I want things to be pleasant for him.

*The Chaplain.* (*With a touch of impatience*) The Law hardly shares your view, I'm afraid.

*Cokeson.* He's all alone there by himself. I'm afraid it'll turn him silly. And nobody wants that, I s'pose. He cried when I saw him. I don't like to see a man cry.

*The Chaplain.* It's a very rare thing for them to give way like that.



*The Chaplain.* He is a young man with very strange looks. I don't think he is of Church of England.

*Cokeson.* No.

*The Chaplain.* I know it.

*The Governor.* (To *Wooder*) Would you please ask the Doctor to come here for a minute? (To *Cokeson*) I don't think he is married yet.

*Cokeson.* No. But there is a lady, though not well-bred, whom he loves. It is a very sad story of love.

*The Chaplain.* Yes, indeed, if it had not been for wine or woman, the prisons would have remained empty.

*Cokeson.* Yes. But I wanted to tell you something special about Falder. It has affected his mind.

*The Governor.* Well, let us know what you have to say.

*Cokeson.* The story is this. The woman whom Falder loves has a cruel, jealous and hard-hearted husband. She has now left him. The fact is that she was going to run away with her young lover, Falder. It was not nice but I ignored it. But after the trial when Falder was sent to prison, she said that she would earn and live independently and wait for Falder's release from the prison. That was a great consolation to Falder. But after a month of his being sent to the prison, she came to me one day and said that she could not earn enough to maintain her children. She said that she had no friends. She further said that she had to keep away from everybody's way in order to hide herself from her cruel husband. She was so impoverished very soon that she felt obliged to join the poor home. It was a very painful story. I said that I could myself spare a little to her. She was a very nice young lady and she said that it would not be proper to take anything from me. She said that she thought of going back to her husband. She knew that he was a bad, jealous and hard-hearted fellow but she could not help herself. I also could not have advised her otherwise.

*The Chaplain.* Yes, indeed, you could not.

*Cokeson.* Yes, I could not and I am now sorry for it. He has to be in the prison for three years. I want that he should find the world congenial when he is released from the prison.

*The Chaplain.* The law takes no cognizance of such sentimental ideas as yours, sir.

*Cokeson.* He is all alone in his solitary cell. I am afraid it will turn him mad. And nobody wants to go mad, I am sure. He cried when I saw him last in his solitary confinement during trial. I don't like to see a man crying.

*The Chaplain.* It is very rare for the convicts to be so sentimental.



*Cokeson.* (Looking at him—in a tone of sudden dogged hostility)  
I keep dogs.

*The Chaplain.* Indeed ?

*Cokeson.* Ye-es. And I say this ; I wouldn't shut one of them up all by himself, week after week, not if he'd bite me all over.

*The Chaplain.* Unfortunately, the criminal is not a dog ; he has a sense of right and wrong.

*Cokeson.* But that's not the way to make him feel it.

*The Chaplain.* Ah ! there I'm afraid we must differ.

*Cokeson.* It's the same with dogs. If you treat 'em with kindness they'll do anything for you ; but to shut 'em up alone, it only makes 'em savage.

*The Chaplain.* Surely you should allow those who have had a little more experience than yourself to know what is best for prisoners.

*Cokeson.* (Doggedly) I know this young feller, I've watched him for years. He's neurotic—got no stamina. His father died of consumption. I'm thinking of his future. If he's to be kept there shut up by himself, without a cat to keep him company, it'll do him harm. I said to him : "Where do you feel it ?" "I can't tell you, Mr. Cokeson," he said, "but sometimes I could beat my head against the wall." It's not nice.

(During this speech the *Doctor* has entered. He is a medium-sized, rather good-looking man, with a quick eye. He stands leaning against the window.

*The Governor.* This gentleman thinks the separate is telling on Q 3007—Falder, young thin fellow, star class. What do you say, Doctor Clements ?

*The Doctor.* He doesn't like it, but it's not doing him any harm, it's only a month.

*Cokeson.* But he was weeks before he came in here.

*The Doctor.* We can always tell. He's lost no weight since he's been here.

*Cokeson.* It's his state of mind I'm speaking of.

*The Doctor.* His mind's all right so far. He's nervous, rather melancholy. I don't see signs of anything more. I'm watching him carefully.

*Cokeson.* (Now pleased) I'm glad to hear you say that.



*Cokeson.* I keep dogs !

*The Chaplain.* Yes, but what of these ?

*Cokeson.* I wish to say that I would not shut even a dog all alone even if he bit me all over.

*The Chaplain.* Unfortunately, the convicts here are not dogs. They are men and therefore should know right and wrong.

*Cokeson.* But this kind of solitary confinement cannot mend them.

*The Chaplain.* Well, sir, I differ from you on this point.

*Cokeson.* It is the same with dogs. If you treat a dog with kindness he will do anything for you. But if you shut up a dog all alone, he would only grow wild and bite you.

*The Chaplain.* You would admit that the authorities of the prison who have more experience of the prisoners than you know better what is best for them.

*Cokeson.* (*Doggedly.*) I know this young prisoner, Falder. I have known him for years. He is nervous type of man. He has got little strength. His father died of consumption. I am just thinking of his future. If he is kept in solitary confinement without any companion in the cell, he would certainly go mad. Earlier, when he was in solitary confinement, during his trial, I asked him where he felt the pain most. He said that he could not tell it but said that he felt like breaking his head against the wall. That was very bad.

(During this speech the Doctor has entered. He is a medium-sized, rather good-looking man, with a quick eye. He stands leaning against the window.

*The Governor.* (*To the Doctor*) This gentleman thinks that solitary confinement is injuring the mind and health of the young thin fellow of the star class, number Q 3007. What is your report, doctor ?

*The Doctor.* He does not like solitary confinement. But not liking is not the same thing as causing him harm. And moreover, it is a matter of a month only.

*Cokeson.* But he had to remain in solitary confinement for several weeks during trial before he came here.

*The Doctor.* We can always tell. He has lost no weight since he has been confined to his cell.

*Cokeson.* I am speaking of his state of mind, sir.

*The Doctor.* His mind is quite normal so far. He is, of course, a nervous and rather melancholy young fellow. I don't see any other sign of worry. I am keeping a careful watch on him.

*Cokeson.* I am glad to hear that you are watching him carefully.



*The Chaplain. (More suavely)* It's just at this period that we are able to make some impression on them, sir. I am speaking from my special standpoint.

*Cokeson. (Turning bewildered to the Governor)* I don't want to be unpleasant, but I do feel it's awkward.

*The Governor.* I'll make a point of seeing him to-day.

*Cokeson.* I'm much obliged to you. I though perhaps seeing him every day you wouldn't notice it.

*The Governor. (Rather sharply)* If any sign of injury to his health shows itself his case will be reported at once. That's fully provided for. *(He rises.)*

*Cokeson. (Following his own thoughts)* Of course, what you don't see doesn't trouble you ; but I don't want to have him on my mind.

*The Governor.* I think you may safely leave it to us, sir.

*Cokeson. (Mollified and apologetic)* I thought you'd understand me. I'm a plain man—never set myself up against authority. *(Expanding to the Chaplain.)* Nothing personal meant. Good-morning.

*(As he goes out the three officials do not look at each other, but their faces wear peculiar expressions.)*

*The Chaplain.* Our friend seems to think that prison is a hospital.

*Cokeson. (Returning suddenly with an apologetic air)* There's just one little thing. This woman—I suppose I mustn't ask you to let him see her. It'd be a rare treat for them both. He'll be thinking about her all the time. Of course she's not his wife. But he's quite safe in here. They're a pitiful couple. You couldn't make an exception ?

*The Governor. (Wearily)* As you say' my dear sir. I couldn't make an exception ; he won't be allowed a visit till he goes to a convict prison.

*Cokeson.* I see. *(Rather coldly).* Sorry to have troubled you.

*(He again goes out.)*

*The Chaplain. (Shrugging his shoulders)* The plain man indeed, poor fellow. Come and have some lunch, Clements ?

*(He and the Doctor go out talking.)*

*(The Governor, with a sigh, sits down at his table and takes up a pen.)*

*The curtain falls.*

## SCENE II

*(Part of the ground corridor of the prison. The walls are coloured with greenish distemper up to a stripe of deeper green)*  
CC-O. Agamnigam Digital Preservation Foundation, Chandigarh



*The Chaplain.* It is always at this period of the imprisonment that we are able to make some impression on them. I am speaking from the moral point of view.

*Cokeson.* I don't want to be disourteous to you, sir, but I feel it is all very awkward.

*The Governor.* I will definitely meet him today.

*Cokeson.* I shall feel much obliged to you, sir. But I think that you would not be able to notice his state of mind even if you see him everyday.

*The Governor.* If his health declines in any way, the matter will at once be reported to me. This is always done under law.

*Cokeson.* Of course, you don't take any cognizance of those mental, emotional and moral injuries which you cannot see but I don't want to have him on my mind all the time.

*The Governor.* You can safely leave that to us.

*Cokeson.* I thought you would understand me. I am a simple man and I have very seldom set myself up against any authority. (*To the Chaplain*) Please don't take my words personally. Good-morning.

(As he goes out, the three officials avoid looking at each other, but their faces show peculiar expressions on them.)

*The Chaplain.* He seems to think that prison is a hospital.

(*Cokeson returns.*)

*Cokeson.* There is just one little thing that I forgot to ask you. There is the woman whom Falder loves. Perhaps I would be asking too much of you if I ask you let him see her. It would be a great privilege to both of them. He must be thinking about her all the time. Of course she is not his wife. But he is quite safe in his cell. They are a pitiful pair of lovers. Could you not make an exception to them, sir?

*The Governor.* I am sorry, sir, I cannot make an exception. He cannot be allowed a visit until he goes to the ordinary convict prison.

*Cokeson.* I see. I am sorry to have given you this trouble.

(*He goes out.*)

*The Governor.* He is indeed a poor plain man. Come on, sir, let us have our lunch.

(*The Governor sits down at his table with a deep sigh*)

(*The curtain falls.*)

## SCENE II

[ A ground corridor of the prison. The walls are distempered in green colour to the height of man's shoulder. Above this



about the height of a man's shoulder, and above this line are whitewashed. The floor is of blackened stones. Daylight is filtering through a heavily barred window at the end. The doors of four cells are visible. Each cell door has a little round peep-hole at the level of a man's eye, covered by a little round disc, which, raised upwards, affords a view of the cell. On the wall, close to each cell door, hangs a little square board with the prisoner's name, number, and record.

(Overhead can be seen the iron structures of the first floor and second-floor corridors.

(*The Warder Instructor*, a bearded man in blue uniform, with an apron, and some dangling keys, is just emerging from one of the cells.

*Instructor.* (*Speaking from the door into the cell*) I'll have another bit for you when that's finished.

*O'Cleary.* (*Unseen—in an Irish voice*) Little doubt o' that, sir.

*Instructor.* (*Gossiping*) Well, you'd rather have it than nothing, I s'pose.

*O'Cleary.* An' that's the blessed truth.

[Sounds are heard of a cell door being closed and locked, and of approaching footsteps.

*Instructor.* (*In a sharp, changed voice*) Look alive over it !

[*He shuts the cell door, and stands at attention.*

*The Governor* comes walking down the corridor, followed by *Wooder*.

*The Governor.* Anything to report ?

*Instructor.* (*Saluting*) Q 3007 (*He points to a cell*) is behind with his work, sir. He'll lose marks to-day.

[*The Governor* nods and passes on to the end cell. *The Instructor* goes away.

*The Governor.* This is our maker of saws, isn't it ?

[He takes the saw from his pocket as *Wooder* throws open the door of the cell. The convict *Moaney* is seen lying on his bed, athwart the cell, with his cap on. He springs up and stands in the middle of the cell. He is a raw-boned fellow about fifty-six years old, with outstanding bat's ears and fierce, staring, steel-coloured eyes.

*Wooder.* Cap off ! (*Moaney removes his cap.*) Out here !

(*Moaney comes to the door.*

*The Governor.* [Beckoning him out into the corridor, and holding up the saw—with the manner of an officer speaking to a private] Anything to say about this, my man ? *Moaney* is silent.

Come !



the wall is whitewashed. The floor is made of black stones. Sunlight is coming through a window. The doors of four cells can be seen. In each door of the cell there is a hole at the height of a man's eye, covered with a disk, which can be raised up to show the inside of the cell. On one side of each door there hangs a little square board with the name of the prisoner, and his number and record written on it.

(Overhead can be seen the iron structure of the first-floor and the second-floor corridors.

(Form one of the cells the Warder Instructor, a bearded man in blue uniform, with an apron on which there hangs a bunch of keys, is seen coming out.

*Instructor.* I shall give you another piece of it when it is done.

*O'Cleary.* Definitely, sir.

*Instructor.* Well, you would rather like to have this little work than to remain idle, I think.

*O'Cleary.* That is very true.

[*The Governor enters, followed by Wooder.*]

*The Governor.* Do you have anything to report ?

*Instructor.* Q 3007, Falder, is not doing adequate work. He will lose marks.

(*The Governor passes on to the last cell.*)

*The Governor.* Is this the man that makes saws ?

[*The Governor takes out the saw from his pocket and sees it. Wooder opens the door of cell. The convict Moaney is seen lying on his bed across the cell, with his cap on. He is a rough-looking, sharp-eyed man of fifty-six.*

*Wooder.* (*To Moaney.*) Take off your cap and come out.

*The Governor.* (*Holding up the saw*) Do you have anything to say about the saw, Moaney ? Please, tell us.



*Moaney.* It passed the time.

*The Governor.* (*Pointing into the cell*) Not enough to do, eh ?

*Moaney.* It don't occupy your mind.

*The Governor.* (*Tapping the saw*) You might find a better way than this.

*Moaney.* (*Sullenly*) Well ! What way ? I must keep my hand in against the time I get out. What is the good of anything else to me at my time of life ? (*With a gradual change to civility, as his tongue warms.*) Ye know that, sir. I'll be in again within a year or two, after I've done this lot. I don't want to disgrace meself when I'm out. You've got your pride keeping the prison smart; well, I've got mine. (*Seeing that the Governor is listening with interest, he goes on, pointing to the saw.*) I must be doin' a little o'this. It is no harm to any one. I was five weeks makin' that saw—a bit of all right it is, too ; now I'll get cells, I suppose, or seven days' bread and water. You can't help it, sir, I know that—I quite put meself in your place.

*The Governor.* Now, look here, Moaney, if I pass it over will you give me your word not to try it on again ? Think !

[He goes into the cell, walks to the end of it, mounts the stool and tries the window-bars.

*The Governor.* (*Returning*) Well ?

*Moaney.* (*Who has been reflecting*) I've got another six weeks to do in here, alone. I can't do it and think o'nothing. I must have something to interest me. You've made me a sporting offer, sir, but I can't pass my word about it. I shouldn't like to deceive a gentleman. (*Pointing into the cell*) Another four hours' steady work would have done it.

*The Governor.* Yes, and what then ? Caught, brought back, punishment. Five weeks' hard work to make this and cells at the end of it, while they put a new bar to your window. Is it worth it, Moaney ?

*Moaney.* (*With a sort of fierceness*) Yes, it is.

*The Governor.* (*Putting his hand to his brow*) Oh, well ! Two days' cells—bread and water.

*Moaney.* Thank'e sir.

(*He turns quickly like an animal and slips into his cell.*

(*The Governor locks after him and shakes his head as Wooder closes and locks the cell door.*

*The Governor.* Open Clipton's cell.

[*Wooder opens the door of Clipton's cell. Clipton is sitting on a stool just inside the door, at work on a pair of trousers. He is a small, thick, oldish man, with an almost shaven head, and smouldering little dark eyes behind smoked spectacles. He gets up and stands motionless in the doorway, peering at his visitors.*



*Moaney.* I made it just to pass time,  
*The Governor.* It means you don't have enough of work to do.

*Moaney.* The work given in the prison does not engage the mind.

*The Governor.* You should have found some better way of keeping yourself busy.

*Moaney.* Well, what could be the better way ? I must keep up the practice of my hand for the time when I am released from here. What is the good of practising any other thing. I don't want to face any disgrace after my release, You can feel proud for keeping the prison smart. Well, I have my object of pride in this. I must keep up my practice of making saws. I cause no harm to anybody, if I keep up this practice. I laboured for five weeks for making that saw and it was a good piece. But I shall have to go to cell for making it, or perhaps I shall have to live on bread and water only for seven days. You can't help me, sir, I am sure ; I can put myself in your position and realize your difficulty.

*The Governor.* Well, Moaney, if I excuse you this time, do you promise that you will not do it again ? Consider it.

(He goes into the cell, walks to the end of it, mounts the stool, and tries the window-bars.

*The Governor.* (Returning) Well ?

*Moaney.* Sir, I have yet to pass six weeks here. I don't know how I can pass this without doing anything. I must have something to keep me engaged. You have made a very generous offer, sir, but I can't promise that I shall not try it again. I don't want to deceive a gentleman like you. (Pointing into the cell) Another four hours' work would have cut that bar.

*The Governor.* Yes, but what would have been the result ? You would have been caught, brought back and punished for it severely. You may have been put to five weeks' hard labour and then solitary cell ; and they would have immediately put another bar to the window. Was it worth your trying then Moaney ?

*Moaney.* Yes, sir. It is.

*The Governor.* Oh, then, I send you to two days' solitary confinement on bread and water only.

*Moaney.* Thanks, sir.

(Moaney goes back to his cell and Wooder locks it

*The Governor.* Open Clipton's cell.

(Wooder opens the door of Clipton's cell. Clipton is sitting on a stool inside the cell, repairing a pair of trousers. He is an old, small-sized man, with a bald head, dull spectacled eyes. He gets up and stands on the doorway, gazing at the visitors)



*The Governor.* (*Beckoning*) Come out here a minute, Clipton.

(*Clipton*, with a sort of dreadful quietness, comes into the corridor, the needle and thread in his hand. *The Governor* signs to *Wooder*, who goes into the cell and inspects it carefully.

*The Governor.* How are your eyes ?

*Clipton.* I don't complain of them. I don't see the sun here. (*He makes a stealthy movement, protruding his neck a little.*) There's just one thing, Mr. Governor, as you're speaking to me. I wish you'd ask the cove next door here to keep a bit quieter.

*The Governor.* What's the matter ? I don't want any tales, Clipton.

*Clipton.* He keeps me awake. I don't know who he is. (*with contempt*) One of this star class, I expect. Oughtn't to be here with us.

*The Governor.* (*Quietly*) Quite right, Clipton. He'll be moved when there's a cell vacant.

*Clipton.* He knocks about like a wild beast in the early morning. I'm not used to it—stops me getting my sleep out. In the evening too. It's not fair, Mr. Governor, as you're speaking to me. Sleep's the comfort I've got here ; I'm entitled to take it out full.

(*Wooder* comes out of the cell, and instantly, as though extinguished, *Clipton* moves with stealthy suddenness back into his cell.

*Wooder.* All right, sir.

(*The Governor nods. The door is closed and locked.*

*The Governor.* Which is the man who banged on his door this morning ?

*Wooder.* [*Going towards O'Cleary's cell*] This one, sir, O' Cleary. He lifts the disc and glances through the peep-hole.

*The Governor.* Open.

*Wooder.* throws open the door. *O'Cleary*, who is seated at a little table by the door as if listening, springs up and stands at attention just inside the doorway. He is a broad-faced, middle-aged man, with a wide, thin, flexible mouth, and little holes under his high cheek-bones.

*The Governor.* Where's the joke, O'Cleary ?

*O'Cleary.* The joke, your honour ? I've not seen one for a long time.

*The Governor.* Banging on your door ?

*O'Cleary.* Oh ! that !

*The Governor.* It's womanish.

*O'Cleary.* An' it's that I'm becoming this two months past.

*The Governor.* Anything to complain of ?



*The Governor.* Come out for a minute, Clipton.

(Clipton comes out quietly, in a frightened manner, with needle and thread in his hand. The Governor signs to Wooder to go inside the cell and inspect it carefully.

*The Governor.* How are your eyes now ?

*Clipton.* I have made no complaint about them, sir. The difficulty is that I can't see sunlight here. There is just one thing, sir. Kindly ask the convict in the next cell to keep a little more quiet.

*The Governor.* What is the trouble with him ? Tell me briefly.

*Clipton.* He does not let me sleep. I don't know who he is. He is one of the star class. I believe. He should not have been here in this class.

*The Governor.* You are right. He will be removed to another cell when there is vacancy.

*Clipton.* He beats at the walls and door in the mornings like a beast. I am not accustomed to this kind of noise. It disturbs me in my sleep. He does so in the evenings too. This is unfair. Sleep is the only luxury we can indulge in here, and I must have my full share of it.

(Wooder comes out after inspecting the cell, and Clipton moves back into the cell.

*The Governor.* Which is the man who strikes at the door in the morning ?

*Wooder.* (Going to O'Cleary's cell.) This is the man, sir.

(Wooder opens the next cell. O'Cleary is seen sitting at table by the door, as if listening. He springs upon his feet and stands at attention on the doorway. He is a broad-faced, middle-aged man, with a thin, soft mouth and hollow cheeks.

*The Governor.* What is this joke, O'Cleary ?

*O'Cleary.* Joke, sir ? I have had no such privilege for a long time.

*The Governor.* Why do you strike at the door ?

*O'Cleary.* You mean that, sir !

*The Governor.* It is very cowardly.

*O'Cleary.* Sir, I am becoming that during the last two months.

*The Governor.* Do you have anything to complain of ?



*O'Cleary.* No, sir.

*The Governor.* You're an old hand ; you ought to know better.

*O'Cleary.* Yes, I've been through it all.

*The Governor.* You've got a youngster next door ; you'll upset him.

*O'Cleary.* It cam' over me, your honour. I can't always be the same steady man.

*The Governor.* Work all right ?

*O'Cleary.* (*Taking up a rush mat he is making*) Oh ! I can do it on my head. It's the miserablest stuff—don't take the brains of a mouse. (*Working his mouth.*) It's here I feel it—the want of a little noise—a terrible little wud aise me.

*The Governor.* You know as well as I do that if you were out in the shops you wouldn't be allowed to talk.

*O'Cleary.* (*With a look of profound meaning*) Not with my mouth.

*The Governor.* Well, then ?

*O'Cleary.* But it's the great conversation I'd be havin'.

*The Governor.* (*With a smile*) Well, no more conversation on your door.

*O'Cleary.* No, sir. I wud not have the little wit to repate meself.

*The Governor.* (*Turning*) Good-night.

*O'Cleary.* Good-night, your honour.

(*He turns into his cell. The Governor shuts the door.*)

*The Governor.* (*Looking at the record card*) Can't help liking the poor blackguard.

*Wooder.* He's an amiable man, sir.

*The Governor.* (*Pointing down the corridor*) Ask the doctor to come here, Mr. Wooder.

(*Wooder salutes and goes away down the corridor.*)

(*The Governor goes to the door of Falder's cell. He raises his uninjured hand to uncover the peep-hole ; but without uncovering it, shakes his head and drops his hand ; then, after scrutinizing the record board, he opens the cell door. Falder, who is standing against it, lurches forward, with a gasp.*)

*The Governor.* (*Beckoning him out*) Now tell me ; can't you settle down, Falder ?

*Falder.* (*In a breathless voice*) Yes, sir.

*The Governor.* You know what I mean ? It's no good running your head against a stone wall, is it ?

*Falder.* No, sir.

*The Governor.* Well, come



*O'Cleary.* No, sir. Thanks.

*The Governor.* You are an old inmate, you should know better.

*O'Cleary.* Yer, sir, I have almost completed my term.

*The Governor.* There is a young man in the next cell, you terrorise him.

*O'Cleary.* I thought of it myself, sir. but I can't always control myself.

*The Governor.* Your work is going on well ?

*O'Cleary.* I can do it without using my head at all. It is the dullest kind of work, which requires no mind at all. I feel like talking, or rather making noise. That would give me ease.

*The Governor.* Everybody knows that even a free man, when he goes to the shops, is not allowed to talk.

*O'Cleary.* I wouldn't of course shout.

*The Governor.* Well, what do you want then ?

*O'Cleary.* I wish to have great conversation.

*The Governor.* Well, no conversation with the door !

*O'Cleary.* Right, sir, I would not have the wit to repeat the same.

*(O'Cleary goes back. The Governor shuts the door.)*

*The Governor.* I can't help liking this old man.

*Wooder.* He is quite gentle, sir.

*The Governor.* Kindly call the doctor.

*(The Governor goes to Falder's cell. He sees the record board on the cell door and reads it carefully. The door is opened and Falder comes out.)*

*The Governor.* Have you not reconciled to this situation, Falder ?

*Falder.* Yes sir, I have.

*The Governor.* I mean it is no use striking your head against the wall.

*Falder.* Yes, sir.

*The Governor.* Well, then keep yourself calm.

*Falder.* I do try, sir.

*The Governor.* Can't you have your sleep ?

*Falder.* I get very little sleep, sir. I have the worst time from 2 o'clock in the morning.

*The Governor.* How is it ?

*Falder.* I can't say, sir. I was always nervous. Everything grows beyond proportions in those early hours. I feel I shall never get out of the prison.

*The Governor.* This is a bad psychology. Keep yourself calm.



*Falder.* I try sir.

*The Governor.* Can't you sleep ?

*Falder.* Very little. Between two o'clock and getting up's the worst time.

*The Governor.* How's that ?

*Falder.* (*His lips twitch with a sort of smile*) I don't know, sir. I was always nervous. (*Suddenly voluble*). Everything seems to get such a size then. I feel I'll never get out as long as I live.

*The Governor.* That's morbid, my lad. Pull yourself together.

*Falder.* (*With an equally sudden dogged resentment*) Yes—I've got to—

*The Governor.* Think of all these other fellows.

*Falder.* They're used to it.

*The Governor.* They all had to go through it once for the first time, just as you're doing now.

*Falder.* Yes, sir, I shall get to be like them in time, I suppose.

*The Governor.* (*Rather taken aback*) H'm ! Well ! That rests with you. Now, come. Set your mind to it, like a good fellow. You're still quite sound. A man can make himself what he likes.

*Falder.* [*Wistfully*] Yes, sir.

*The Governor.* Take a good hold of yourself. Do you read ?

*Falder.* I don't take the words in. (*Hanging his head*) I know it's no good ; but I can't help thinking of what's going on outside.

*The Governor.* Private trouble ?

*Falder.* Yes.

*The Governor.* You mustn't think about it.

*Falder.* (*Looking back at his cell*) how can I help it, sir ? He suddenly becomes motionless as *Wooder* and the *Doctor* approach. *The Governor* motions to him to go back into his cell.

*Falder.* [*Quick and low*] I'm quite right in my head, sir.

[*He goes back into his cell.*]

*The Governor.* (*To the Doctor*) Jast go in and see him, Clements.

*The Governor* goes into the cell. *The Doctor* pushes the door nearly closing it, and walks towards the window.

*Wooder.* (*Following*) Sorry you should be troubled like this, sir. Very contented lot of men, on the whole.

*The Governor.* (*Shortly*) You think so ?

*Wooder.* Yes, sir. It's Christmas doing it, in my opinion.

*The Governor.* (*To himself*) Queer, that !

*Wooder.* Beg pardon, sir ?



*Falder.* Yes; sir. I will try.

*The Governor.* Think that there are so many others like you.

*Falder.* They have grown accustomed, sir ?

*The Governor.* They all had their first experience like you.

*Falder.* Yes, sir ; I will also gradually grow accustomed like them.

*The Governor.* Well, that is up to you. Be a good fellow. You are so young yet. At this age a young man can make himself what he likes.

*Falder.* Yes, sir.

*The Governor.* Keep control upon yourself. Do you not read ?

*Falder.* I don't understand what I read. It is useless to read in this way. I can't help thinking of outside.

*The Governor.* Is there any personal problem outside ?

*Falder.* Yes, sir.

*The Governor.* You must not think of it here.

*Falder.* How can I help it, sir ?

(As Wooder and the Doctor approach, Falder becomes restless.

The Governor motions to him to go back to his cell.

*The Governor.* (To the Doctor) Just go and examine him, Mr. Clements.

(The Doctor goes into the cell. The Governor nearly closes the door, and walks towards the window.

*Wooder.* (To the Governor) I am sorry you are troubled about them, sir. On the whole, they are all contented with their lot.

*The Governor.* Do you think they are really content ?

*Wooder.* Yes, sir. May be it is on account of the Christmas.

*The Governor.* Very strange !

*Wooder.* What do you mean, sir ?



*The Governor.* Christmas !

(He turns towards the window, leaving *Wooder* looking at him with a sort of pained anxiety.

*Wooder.* (Suddenly) Do you think we make show enough, sir ? If you'd like us to have more holly ?

*The Governor.* Not at all, Mr. *Wooder*.

*Wooder.* Very good, sir.

*The Doctor* has come out of *Falder's* cell, and the *Governor* beckons to him.

*The Governor.* Well ?

*The Doctor.* I can't make anything much of him. He's nervous, of course.

*The Governor.* Is there any sort of case to report ? Quite frankly, *Doctor*.

*The Doctor.* Well, I don't think the separate's doing him any good ; but then I could say the same of a lot of them—they'd get on better in the shops, there's no doubt.

*The Governor.* You mean you'd have to recommend others ?

*The Doctor.* A dozen at least. It's on his nerves. There's nothing tangible. This fellow here (*pointing to O' Cleary's cell*), for instance—feels it just as much, in his way. If I once get away from physical facts—I shan't know where I am. Conscientiously, sir, I don't know how to differentiate him. He hasn't lost weight. Nothing wrong with his eyes. His pulse is good. Talks all right. It's only another week before he goes.

*The Governor.* It doesn't amount to melancholia ?

*The Doctor.* (*Shaking his head*) I can report on him if you like ; but if I do I ought to report on others.

*The Governor.* I see. (*Looking towards Falder's cell.*) The poor devil must just stick it then.

(*As he says this he looks absently at Wooder.*

*Wooder.* Beg pardon, sir ?

(*For answer the Governor stares at him, turns on his heel, and walks away.*

(*This is a sound as of beating on metal,*

*The Governor.* (*Stopping*) Mr. *Wooder* ?

*Wooder.* Banging on his door, sir. I thought we should have more of that.

(*He hurries forward, passing the Governor, who follows slowly.*



*The Governor.* This Christmas.

(The Governor turns towards the window. Wooder looks at him with a pained anxiety.

*Wooder.* Do you think, sir, we make too much of show of the Christmas to make them feel sorry for themselves?

*The Governor.* No, not that.

(The Doctor comes out of the cell.)

*The Governor.* Is he all right?

*The Doctor.* I can't discover anything in particular. He is only nervous.

*The Governor.* Is there anything to report about him in particular? Tell me frankly, doctor.

*The Doctor.* Well, I don't think solitary confinement is doing him any harm in particular. And this is exactly the case with so many of them. Of course, they would feel better out in the market.

*The Governor.* Do you mean that you would have to recommend many if you recommend him.

*The Doctor.* Yes, at least a dozen. He is only nervous. There is no other physical ailment. O'Cleary, the fellow in the other cell, feels it as much. If I ignore physical facts and take into consideration emotional or sentimental facts, I shall have no end anywhere. Really speaking, sir, I can hardly find any difference between him and others. He has lost no weight. His eyes are normal. His pulse is satisfactory. He talks all right. And he will go from here only a week after.

*The Governor.* Yes, the poor man will have to stay here till then.  
(He looks at Wooder.

*Wooder.* Beg your pardon, sir.

(The Governor goes away. As he goes, he hears again the sound of Falder's striking head against the wall.

(The Governor. Mr. Wooder, what is that?

*Wooder.* Falder is again banging on the door, sir. I am sure he will not stop that.

(He goes forward hurriedly, passing the Governor, who follows slowly.



## SCENE III

(*Falder's cell, a whitewashed space thirteen feet broad by seven deep, and nine feet high, a rounded ceiling. The floor is of shiny blackened bricks. The barred window with a ventilator, is high up in the middle of the end wall. In the middle of the opposite end wall is the narrow door. In a corner are the mattress and bedding rolled up (two blankets, two sheets, and a coverlet). Above them is a quarter-circular wooden shelf, on which is a Bible and several little devotional books piled in a symmetrical pyramid; there are also a black hair-brush, tooth-brush, and a bit of soap. In another corner is the wooden frame of a bed, standing on end. There is a dark ventilator under the window, and another over the door. Falder's work (a shirt to which he is putting button-holes) is hung to a nail on the wall over a small wooden table, on which the novel "Lorna Doone" lies open. Low down in the corner by the door is a thick glass screen, about a foot square, covering the gas-jet let into the wall. There is also a wooden stool, and a pair of shoes beneath it. Three bright round tins are set under the window.*

(*In fast-fading daylight, Falder, in his stockings, is seen standing motionless, with his head inclined towards the door, listening. He moves a little closer to the door, his stockinged feet making no noise. He stops at the door. He is trying harder and harder to hear something, any little thing that is going on outside. He springs suddenly upright—as if at a sound—and remains perfectly motionless. Then, with a heavy sigh, he moves to his work and stands looking at it, with his head down; he does a stitch or two, having the air of a man so lost in sadness that each stitch, as it were, a coming to life. Then, turning abruptly, he begins pacing the cell, moving his head, like an animal pacing its cage. He stops again at the door, listens, and, placing the palms of his hands against it with his fingers spread out, leans his forehead against the iron. Turning from it presently he moves slowly back towards the window tracing his way with his finger along the top line of the distemper that runs round the walls. He stops under the window, and, picking up the lid of one of the tins, peers into it, as if trying to make a companion of his own face. It has grown very nearly dark. Suddenly the lid falls out of his hand with a clatter—the only sound that has broken the silence—and he stands staring intently at the wall where the stuff of the shirt is hanging rather white in the darkness—he seems to be seeing somebody or something there. There is a sharp tap and click; the cell light behind the glass screen has been turned up. The cell is brightly lighted. Falder is seen gasping for breath.*

(*A sound from far away, as of distant, dull beating on thick metal is suddenly audible. Falder shinks back, and is not able to*



## SCENE III

(Falder's cell, a white-washed space thirteen feet broad by seven feet deep, and nine feet high, with a rounded ceiling. The floor is of shiny blackened bricks. The barred window, with a ventilator, is high upon the wall. In the opposite wall there is a small door. In one of the corners the mattress and the bedding are rolled up. The bedding includes two blankets, two sheets and a cover. Above them there is a small wooden shelf on which there is a Bible and a few more religious books. There are also black hair-comb, tooth brush and a little bit of soap. In the other corner there is a wooden bed standing on one end. On the nail there hangs a shirt to which Falder was putting button-holes. On a small table there lies an open novel "Lorna Doone". In one corner there is a glass-pane, about one square foot, covering a gasjet. Underneath a stool there is a pair of shoes. There are three tins placed under the window.

(In fast-fading daylight, Falder, in his stockings, is seen standing motionless, with his head inclined towards the door, his stocking-feet making no noise. He stops at the door. He is trying harder and harder to hear something, 'any little thing that is going on outside. He springs suddenly upright—as if at a sound—and remains perfectly motionless. Then, with a heavy sigh, he moves to his work, and stands looking at it, with his head down; he does a stitch or two having the air of a man so lost in sadness that each stitch, as it were, is a coming to life. Then turning abruptly, he begins pacing the cell, moving his head, like an animal pacing its cage. He stops again at the door, listens, and placing the palms of his hands against it with his fingers spread out, leans his forehead against the iron. Turning from it presently he moves slowly back towards the window, tracing his way with his finger along the top line of the distemper that runs round the walls. He stops under the window, and picking up the lid of one of the tins, peers into it, as if trying to make a companion of his own face. It has grown very nearly dark. Suddenly the lid falls out of his hand with a clatter—the only sound that has broken the silence—and he stands staring intently at the wall where the stuff of the shirt is hanging, rather white, in the darkness—he seems to be seeing somebody or something there. There is a sharp tap and click; the cell light behind the glass screen has been turned up. The cell is brightly lighted. Falder is seen gasping for breath.

(A sound from far away, as of distant, dull beating on thick metal is suddenly audible. Falder shrinks back, not able to bear this sudden clamour. But the sound grows, as though some



bear this sudden clamour. But the sound grows, as though some great tumbril were rolling towards the cell. And gradually it seems to hypnotize him. The begins creaping inch by inch nearer to the door. The banging sound, travelling from cell to cell, draws closer and closer ; *Falder's* hands are seen moving as if his spirit had already joined in this beating, and the sound swells till it seems to have entered the very cell. He suddenly raises his clenched fists. Panting violently, he flings himself at his door, and beats on it.)

*(The curtain falls.)*



great tumbril were rolling towards the cell. And gradually it seems to hypnotize him. He begins creeping inch by inch nearer to the door. The banging sound, travelling from cell to cell, draws closer and closer ; Faldar's hands are seen moving as if his spirit had already joined in this beating and the sound swells till it seems to have entered the very cell. He suddenly raises his clenched fists. Panting violently, he flings himself at the door, and beats on it.)

*(The curtain falls.)*



## ACT IV

(The scene is again *Cokeson's* room, at a few minutes to ten of a March morning, two years later. The doors are all open. *Sweedle*, now blessed with a sprouting moustache, is getting the offices ready. He arranges papers on *Cokeson's* table : then goes to a covered washstand, raises the lid, and looks at himself in the mirror. While he is gazing his fill *Ruth Honeywill* comes in through the outer office and stands in the doorway. There seems a kind of exultation and excitement behind her habitual impassivity.)

*Sweedle.* (*Suddenly seeing her, and dropping the lid of the washstand with a bang*) Hello ! It's you !

*Ruth.* Yes.

*Sweedle.* There's only me here ! They don't waste their time hurrying down in the morning. Why, it must be two years since we had the pleasure of seeing you. (*Nervously*) What have you been doing with yourself ?

*Ruth.* (*Sardonically*) Living.

*Sweedle.* (*Impressed*) If you want to see him (*he points to Cokeson's chair*), he'll be here directly—never misses—not much. (*Delicately*) I hope our friend's back from the country. His time's been up these three months, if I remember. (*Ruth nods*). I was awful sorry about that. The governor made a mistake—if you ask me.

*Ruth.* He did.

*Sweedle.* He ought to have given him a chance. And, I say, the judge ought to ha' let him go after that. They've forgot what human nature's like. Whereas we know.

(*Ruth gives him a honeyed smile*)

*Sweedle.* They come down on you like a cartload of bricks, flatten you out, and when you don't swell up again they complain of it. I know 'em—seen a lot of that sort of thing in my time. (*He shakes his head in the plenitude of wisdom.*) Why, only the other day the governor—

(*But Cokeson has come in through the outer office ; brisk with east wind, and decidedly greyer.*)

*Cokeson.* (*Drawing of his coat and gloves*) Why ! it's you ! (*Then motioning Sweedle out, and closing the door*) Quite a stranger ! Must be two years. D'you want to see me ? I can give you a minute. Sit down ! Family well ?



## ACT IV

(The scene is once more Cokeson's room, around ten in the morning, in the month of March, two years later. The doors are all open. Sweedle, now grown up, with sprouting moustaches, is getting the offices ready. He arranges papers on Cokeson's table, then goes to a washstand, raises the lid and looks at his face in the mirror. While he is thus gazing, Ruth Honeywill comes in and stands on the doorway. She appears to be excited and rejoiced.)

*Sweedle.* Hullo, is that you ?

*Ruth.* Yes.

*Sweedle.* I am alone here. The officers and the clerks do not come so early in the morning. I think we saw you last about two years ago. How did you pass your time during these two years ?

*Ruth.* Just living somehow.

*Sweedle.* If you want to meet Mr. Cokeson, you may wait. He should be coming here very soon. He is never late I hope Falder has come back from the prison. His term of imprisonment has been over for these three months, I remember. I was extremely sorry for him. The Governor made a mistake in prosecuting him—if I am asked.

*Ruth.* Yes, he did.

*Sweedle.* The Government should have given him a chance. I also feel that the Judge should also have acquitted him. The authorities do not seem to have any understanding of human nature. I feel we, the ordinary men, understand human nature better.

*(Ruth gives him a sweet smile.)*

*Sweedle.* The authorities crush you down as if a heavy cart-load of bricks has fallen on you. You fall down crushed and when you fail to rise up again, they complain against you. I have had a good deal of this experience in my lifetime. Now look, only the other day the governor—

(Cokeson enters through the outer office. He seems to be a bit ruffled on account of the cold breeze. He has grown a little grayer now.)

*Cokeson.* Why, Ruth you are here. You seem to be quite a stranger. It must be about two years since we saw you last. Do you want to see me ? I can give you one minute. I hope your family is well.



Ruth. Yes, I am not living where I was.

Cokeson. (*Eyeing her askance*) I hope things are more comfortable at home.

Ruth. I couldn't stay with Honeywill, after all.

Cokeson. You haven't done anything rash, I hope. I should be sorry if you'd done anything rash.

Ruth. I've kept the children with me.

Cokeson. (*Beginning to feel that things are not so jolly as he had hoped*) Well, I'm glad to have seen you. You've not heard from the young man, I suppose, since he came out?

Ruth. Yes, I ran across him yesterday.

Cokeson. I hope he's well.

Ruth. (*With sudden fierceness*) He can't get anything to do. It's dreadful to see him. He's just skin and bone.

Cokeson. (*With genuine concern*) Dear me! I'm sorry to hear that. (*On his guard again*) Didn't they find him a place when his time was up?

Ruth. He was only three weeks. It got out.

Cokeson. I'm sure I don't know what I can do for you, I don't like to be snubby.

Ruth. I can't bear his being like that.

Cokeson. (*Scanning her not unprosperous figure*) I know his relations aren't very forthy about him. Perhaps you can do something for him, till he finds his feet.

Ruth. Not now. I could have—but not now.

Cokeson. I don't understand.

Ruth. (*Proudly*) I've seen him again—that is all over.

Cokeson. (*Staring at her—disturbed*) I'm a family man—I don't want to hear anything unpleasant. Excuse me—I'm very busy.

Ruth. I'd have gone home to my people in the country long ago, but they've never got over me marrying Honeywill. I never was waywise, Mr. Cokeson, but I'm proud. I was only a girl, you see, when I married him. I thought the world of him, of course..... he used to come travelling to our farm.

Cokeson. (*Regretfully*) I did hope you'd have got on better, after you saw me.

Ruth. He used me worse than ever. He couldn't break my nerve, but I lost my health; and then he began knocking the children about...I couldn't stand that. I wouldn't go back now, if he were dying.

Cokeson. (*Who had risen and is shifting about as though dodging stream of lava*) We mustn't be violent, must we?



*Ruth.* Yes, thanks. I am not living at my old place.

*Cokeson.* I hope things are better at home now.

*Ruth.* I could not live with Mr. Honeywill.

*Cokeson.* You have not acted thoughtlessly. I believe. I shall be sorry if you have done anything rash.

*Ruth.* I keep the children with me.

*Cokeson.* Well, anyway, I am glad to have seen you. Have you had any contact with Falder since he came out ?

*Ruth.* Yes, I happened to meet him only yesterday.

*Cokeson.* I hope he is well.

*Ruth.* He has got no job. It is a great pity to see him. He is reduced to a mere skeleton.

*Cokeson.* Alas, I am sorry to hear that. Did not the authorities provide him with a job when he was freed ?

*Ruth.* Yes, but he could serve there only for three weeks. Then he had to leave.

*Cokeson.* I don't know how I can help you. I don't want to be hard.

*Ruth.* I can't bear to see him in this state.

*Cokeson.* I know that his relations are not very happy about him. You can, however, do something for him till he finds some job for himself.

*Ruth.* No, I am sorry. I can't do anything now. I could have done anything for him sometime back.

*Cokeson.* I don't understand your meaning.

*Ruth.* I have met him again and it is now all over.

*Cokeson.* Well, I am an honourable man and I don't want to hear anything indecent. Excuse me, I am very busy.

*Ruth.* I tried to live with my people in the country but they have not excused me for my fault of marrying Honeywill. I never acted wisely in this respect. But I am still proud. I was only an inexperienced girl when I married him. I had a very high opinion of him at that time. He used to come to our farm riding on a horse.

*Cokeson.* I expected that you must have got on better with him after my last meeting with you.

*Ruth.* He used me more and more harshly ; only he could not break my nerve. My health is all shattered. Later, he started beating the children also. I could not bear that. Now I will not go back to him even if he were dying.

*Cokeson.* We (rising) must not be violent in our thoughts and actions.



Ruth. (*Smouldering*) A man that can't behave better than that—  
(*There is silence.*)

Cokeson. (*Fascinated in spite of himself*) Then there you were ! And what did you do then ?

Ruth. (*With a shrug*) Tried the same as when I left him before ...making shirts...cheap things. It was the best I could get, but I never made more than ten shillings a week, buying my own cotton and working all day ; I hardly ever got to bed till past twelve. I kept at it for nine months. (*Fiercely*) Well, I'm not fit for that ; I wasn't made for it. I'd rather die.

Cokeson. My dear woman ! We mustn't talk like that.

Ruth. It was starvation for the children too—after what they'd always had. I soon got not to care. I used to be too tired.

(*She is silent.*)

Cokeson. (*With fearful curiosity*) And—what happened then ?

Ruth. (*With a laugh*) My employer happened then—he's happened ever since.

Cokeson. Dear ! Oh dear ! never came across a thing like this.

Ruth. (*Lully*) He's treated me all right. But I've done with that. Suddenly her lips begin to quiver, and she hides them with the back of her hand.) I never thought I'd see him again, you see. It was just a chance I met him by Hyde Park. We went in there and set down, and he told me all about himself. Oh ! Mr. Cokeson, give him another chance.

Cokeson. (*Greatly disturbed*) Then you've both lost your livings ! what a horrible position !

Ruth. If he could only get here—where there's nothing to find out about him !

Cokeson. We can't have anything derogative to the firm.

Ruth. I've no one else to go to.

Cokeson. I'll speak to the partners, but I don't think they'll take him, under the circumstances. I don't really.

Ruth. He came with me; he's down in the street.

(*She points to the window.*)

Cokeson. (*On his dignity*) He shouldn't have done that until he's sent for. (*Then softening at the look on her face*) We've got a vacancy, as it happens, but I can't promise anything.

Ruth. It would be the saying of him.

Cokeson. Well, I'll do what I can, but I'm not sanguine. Now tell him that I don't want him here till I see how things are. Leave your address ? (*Repeating her.*) 83, Mullingar Street ? (*He notes it on blotting-paper.*) Good-morning.

Ruth. Thank you. (*She moves towards the door, turns as to speak but does not, and goes away.*)



*Ruth.* But we can have no patience with a man who can't behave better.

*Cokeson.* (After a little silence.) So this is your position now. Well, what have you been doing since then?

*Ruth.* I tried same old profession of making shirts and other cheap things. This was all I could do. But I could never earn more than ten shillings a week, for I had to go buying my own cotton, and work all day. I hardly ever went to bed till past twelve. I continued working thus for nine months. I feel I am not fit to undertake such heavy work. I was not made for it. I would rather die.

*Cokeson.* My dear Honeywill, we must not talk like that.

*Ruth.* My children were starving. They felt all the more unhappy after what we used to have in the past. I soon gave up caring for them. I used to be too tired.

*Cokeson.* And what happened after that?

*Ruth.* My employer happened to meet me and he has been meeting me ever since.

*Cokeson.* My dear woman, I never came across such a thing in my lifetime.

*Ruth.* He treated me very sympathetically. But I have done with him too. I never thought I would meet Falder again. But incidentally I happened to meet him only yesterday in Hyde Park. We went in the park and sat down. He told me all about him. O, Mr. Cokeson, I pray, kindly give him another chance in your office.

*Cokeson.* So, both of you are now out of employment. It is a hard situation indeed.

*Ruth.* If you could give a chance in this office once again, it would be excellent. Here you have nothing to find out about him.

*Cokeson.* We can't have anything dishonourable about the office.

*Ruth.* There is no other person to whom I can go.

*Cokeson.* I will speak to the Governors, but I doubt very much whether they will take him again under these circumstances.

*Ruth.* He came with me just now and is waiting there outside in the street.

*Cokeson.* Well, he should not have come until he was called. By chance we have got a vacancy, but I can't promise anything.

*Ruth.* It would be the saving of his life.

*Cokeson.* Well, I will try my best, I am not very hopeful. Tell him that he should not come here until I have understood the whole situation. You can leave your address with me.

(He notes down her address.)

*Ruth.* Thanks.

(She goes towards the door, then suddenly turns back as if wanting to say something, but then forbears and goes out.)



Cokeson. (*Wiping his head and forehead with a large white cotton handkerchief.*) What a business ! (*Then, looking amongst his papers, he sounds his bell. Sweedle answers it.*)

Cokeson. Was that young Richards coming here today after the clerk's place ?

Sweedle. Yes.

Cokeson. Well, keep him in the air ; I don't want to see him yet.

Sweedle. What shall I tell him, sir ?

Cokeson. (*With asperity*) Invent something. Use your brains. Don't stump him off altogether.

Sweedle. Shall I tell him that we've got illness, sir ?

Cokeson. No ! Nothing untrue. Say I'm not here to-day.

Sweedle. Yes, sir. Keep him hankering ?

Cokeson. Exactly. And look here. You remember Falder ? I may be having him round to see me. Now, treat him like you'd have him treat you in a similar position.

Sweedle. I naturally should do.

Cokeson. That's right. When a man's down never hit' im. 'Tisn't necessary. Give him a hand up. That's a metaphor I recommend to you in life. It's sound policy.

Sweedle. Do you think the governors will take him on again, sir ?

Cokeson. Can't say anything about that. (*At the sound of someone having entered the outer office*) Who's there ?

Sweedle. (*Going to the door and looking*) It's Falder, sir.

Cokeson. (*Vexed*) Dear me ! that's very naughty of her. Tell him to call again. I don't want—

(*He breaks off as Falder comes in. Falder is thin, pale, older, his eyes have grown more restless. His clothes are very worn and loose.*)

(*Sweedle nodding cheerfully, withdraws.*)

Cokeson. Glad to see you. You're rather previous. (*Trying to keep things pleasant.*) Shake hands ! She's striking while the iron's hot. (*He wipes his forehead.*) I don't blame her. She's anxious.

(*Falder timidly takes Cokeson's hand and glances towards the partner's door.*)

Cokeson. No—not yet ! Sit down ! (*Falder sits in the chair at the side of Cokeson's table, on which he places his cap.*) Now you are here I'd like you to give me a little account of yourself. (*Looking at him over his spectacles.*) How's your health ?

Falder. I'm alive, Mr. Cokeson.



*Cokeson.* O, what a business is this ! (*He rings the bell. Sweedle appears.*) Did that fellow Richards come today for the vacancy ?

*Sweedle.* Yes, he came.

*Cokeson.* Well, keep him waiting ; I don't want to see him yet,

*Sweedle.* What shall I tell him, sir ?

*Cokeson.* Find out any excuse. Exercise your own judgment. Don't dismiss him for good.

*Sweedle.* Shall I tell him that somebody is ill here ?

*Cokeson.* No don't tell him *anything untrue*. Say that I am not here today.

*Sweedle.* Right, sir, I shall keep him waiting.

*Cokeson.* Yes, and look here. I hope you remember Falder. He may be coming to see me some time. Remember to treat him courteously as you might have met him under normal situation.

*Sweedle.* Yes, sir. I must naturally do so.

*Cokeson.* You are right. When a man is already down, we should not hit him. It is unnecessary. Give him an encouraging and helping hand. I speak metaphorically. (*Probably he means "Maxim" (rule of conduct).*) It is always the best policy.

*Sweedle.* Do you think, sir, the Governors will take him again?

*Cokeson.* We can't say anything. See, who is there ?

*Sweedle.* (*After looking.*) It is Falder, sir.

*Cokeson.* My goodness ! this is very mischievous of Ruth Honeywill. Ask him to come in.

(*Cokeson stops as Falder enters. Falder appears to have grown thinner and paler. His eyes appear to be more restless. His clothes are worn out and loose.*)

*Cokeson.* I am very glad to see you. You look exactly as you were previously. Let us shake hands. Ruth Honeywill is making the best use of the opportunity. She cannot be blamed. She is very anxious about you. (*Falder looks towards Mr. How's door. Cokeson replies, they haven't come yet, and asks him to sit down.*) Now when you have come, I would very much like to hear something about you. How is your health ?

*Falder.* I am just living, sir.



*Cokeson. (Preoccupied)* I'm glad to hear that. About this matter. I don't like doing anything out of the ordinary ; it's not my habit. I'm a plain man, and I want everything smooth and straight. But I promised your friend to speak to the partners, and I always keep my word.

*Falder.* I just want a chance, Mr. Cokeson. I've paid for that job a thousand times and more. I have, sir. No one knows. They say I weighed more when I came out than when I went in. They couldn't weigh me here (*he touches his head or here he touches his heart, and gives a sort of laugh*). Till last night I'd thought there was nothing in here at all.

*Cokeson. (Concerned)* You've not got heart disease ?

*Falder.* Oh ! they passed me sound enough.

*Cokeson.* But they got you a place. didn't they ?

*Falder.* Yes : very good people, knew all about it—very kind to me. I thought I was going to get on first-rate. But one day, all of a sudden, the other clerks got wind of it.....I couldn't stick it, Mr. Cokeson, I couldn't, sir.

*Cokeson.* Easy, my dear fellow, easy.

*Falder.* I had one small job after that, but it didn't last.

*Cokeson..* How was that ?

*Falder.* It's no good deceiving you, Mr. Cokeson. The fact is, I seem to be struggling against a thing that's all round me. I can't explain it : it's as if I was in a net ; as fast as I cut it here, it grows up there. I don't act as I ought to have, about reference : but what are you to do ? You must have them. And that made me afraid, and I left. In fact, I'm—I'm afraid all the time now.

*(He bows his head and learns dejectedly silent over the table.*

*Cokeson.* I feel for you—I do really. Aren't your sisters going to do anything for you ?

*Falder.* One's in consumption. And the other——

*Cokeson.* Ye...es. She told me her husband wasn't quite pleased with you.

*Falder.* When I went there—they were at supper—my sister wanted to give me a kiss—I know. But he just looked at her and said, "What have you come for ?" Well, I pocketed my pride and I said : "Aren't you going to give me your hand, Jim ? Cis is, I know," I said. "Look here !" he said, "that's all very well, but we'd better come to an understanding. I've been expecting you, and I've made up my mind. I'll give you twenty-five pounds to go to Canada with." "I see," I said—"good riddance ! No, thanks ; keep your twenty-five pounds." *Friendship's a queer thing when you've been where I have.*



*Cokeson.* I am glad that you have come. As for your job in this office again, you know, I would do nothing out of the way. It is not my habit. I am a plain and simple man and I do everything in a straightforward way. But I have promised to speak about you to the partners and I will remember my promise.

*Falder.* I just want one more chance, sir. I have paid for this job a thousand times more by undergoing the term of imprisonment. Nobody knows my agency. People say that I weighed more when I went in. But they can't weigh my feelings. I felt nothing was left in my heart until last night when I met Ruth Honeywill.

*Cokeson.* I hope you have not got any heart disease.

*Falder.* No, they have passed me for sound health.

*Cokeson.* But they must have provided you with a job.

*Falder.* Yes, they did. They are very fine people. They were very kind to me. When I came out I thought I shall once again start living honourably. But one day my fellow clerks in my new office got wind of my past and they made a mountain of it. They made it impossible for me to continue there. Therefore, sir, I had to leave.

*Cokeson.* Feel at ease, my young man.

*Falder.* I get another small job after that but that too did not last.

*Cokeson.* How did you lose that?

*Falder.* I cannot conceal anything from you, sir. The fact is that I always feel that I am struggling within a hard and hostile web woven around me. I can't explain what I actually feel. But I feel myself caught up in a web. As I cut the web at one point, it grows around me at another. I did not act as wisely as I ought to have regarding my new employers. What else would I do? I could not erase the past. And that made me nervous and, therefore, I left the place. Now I cannot get rid of this phantom of fear.

*Cokeson.* I am really very sorry for this. Are not your sisters going to do anything for you?

*Falder.* One is patient of consumption. And the other is unable to do anything.

*Cokeson.* Yes, your other sister told me that her husband was not happily disposed towards you.

*Falder.* When I went there, they were at their supper. My sister rose to welcome me. But he just stared at her and checked her. He asked me what for I had come. Well, I digested my insult and offered my hand to him. He just said that I should understand my position better. He explained that he knew that I was expected there some time. Therefore, he had already made up his mind. He offered me twenty-five pounds and suggested that I should go to Canada. I declined to accept his offer and thanking him I said that what I needed was friendship and not money.



*Cokeson.* I understand. Will you take the twenty-five pounds from me? (*Flustered, as Falder regards him with a queer smile.*) Quite without prejudice; I meant it kindly.

*Falder.* They wouldn't let me in.

*Cokeson.* Oh! Ah! No! You aren't looking the thing.

*Falder.* I've slept in the park three nights this week. The dawns aren't all poetry there. But meeting her—I feel a different man this morning. I've often thought the being fond of her's the best thing about me; it's sacred, somehow—and yet it did for me. That's queer, isn't it?

*Cokeson.* I'm sure we're all very sorry for you.

*Falder.* That's what I've found, Mr. Cokeson. Awfully sorry for me. (*With quiet bitterness.*) But it doesn't do to associate with criminals!

*Cokeson.* Come, come, it's no use calling yourself names. That never did a man any good. Put a face on it.

*Falder.* It's easy enough to put a face on it, sir, when you're independent. Try it when you're down like me. They talk about giving you your deserts. Well, I think I've had just a bit over.

*Cokeson.* (*Eyeing him askance over his spectacles*) I hope they haven't made a Socialist of you.

(*Falder* is suddenly still, as if brooding over his past self; he utters a peculiar laugh.

*Cokeson.* You must give them credit for the best intentions. Really you must. Nobody wishes you harm, I'm sure.

*Falder.* I believe that, Mr. Cokeson. Nobody wishes you harm, but they down you all the same. This feeling—(*He stares round him, as though at something closing in*) It's crushing me. (*With sudden impersonality*) I know it is.

*Cokeson.* (*Horribly disturbed*) there's nothing there! We must try and take it quite. I'm sure I've often had you in my prayers. Now leave it to me. I'll use my gumption and take 'em when they're jolly.

(*As he speaks the two partners come in.*

*Cokeson.* (*Rather disconcerted, but trying to put them all at ease*) I didn't expect you quite so soon. I've just been having a talk with this young man. I think you'll remember him.

*James.* (*With a grave keen look*) Quite well. How are you, Falder?

*Walter.* (*Holding out his hand almost timidly*) Very glad to see you again, Falder.

*Falder.* (*Who has recovered his self-control, takes the hand*) Thank you, sir.



*Cokeson.* I understand. Supposing I give you twentyfive pounds without any suggestion of prejudice towards you ; I make this offer in an utmost friendly way.

*Falder.* They would not let me enter under the circumstances.

*Cokeson.* No, no, you are not looking like the old one.

*Falder.* I have slept under the open sky these three nights in the Park. The mornings are no longer beautiful to me as praised by so many poets. But yesterday when I met Ruth, a great change came over me. I am altogether a different man now. I believe that the only thing I possess is her affection for me. My affection is absolutely pure. I am in a very hard situation.

*Cokeson.* I am very sorry for you.

*Falder.* But, sir, is it advisable to have any association with criminals like me ?

*Cokeson.* Well, it is no use abusing yourself. That will do you no good. Try to forget all about it.

*Falder.* It is easy for a person to forget the past if he were independent. But it is very difficult for a person in my situation. They say that the law gives you what you deserve. But I feel that the law gave me more than what I deserved.

*Cokeson.* I hope you are not turned into a socialist. You must give credit to the authorities that they did it with the best of intentions. You must not blame them. Nobody wishes to harm you any longer.

*Falder.* You are right, Mr. Cokeson. Nobody wishes you harm yet they crush you to the ground. It is crushing my heart.

*Cokeson.* I hope there is no trouble with your heart. You must take the situation easy. I am sure I often prayed for you in my prayers. Now leave the whole thing to me I will take my chance and speak about you when I find them in good spirit.

*(James and Walter enter)*

*Cokeson.* I did not expect you so soon, sir. I was just talking to this young man. I think you remember him.

*James.* Yes, very well, how are you Falder?

*Walter.* *(Giving his hand)* I am very glad to see you again, Falder.

*Falder.* Thank you sir, very much.



*Cokeson.* Just a word, Mr. James, *(To Falder, pointing to the clerk's office)* You might go in there a minute. You know your way. Our junior won't be coming this morning. His wife's just had a little family.

*(Falder goes uncertainly out into the clerks' office.)*

*Cokeson.* *(Confidentially)* I'm bound to tell you all about it. He's quite penitent. But there's a prejudice against him. And you're not seeing him to advantage this morning; he's undernourished. It's very trying to go without your dinner.

*James.* Is that so, Cokeson!

*Cokeson.* I wanted to ask you. He's had his lesson. Now we know all about him, and we want a clerk. There is a young fellow applying, but I'm keeping him in the air.

*James.* A gaol-bird in the office, Cokeson? I don't see it.

*Walter.* "The rolling of the chariot-wheels of Justice!" I've never got that out of my head.

*James.* I've nothing to reproach myself with in this affair. What's he been doing since he came out?

*Cokeson.* He's had one or two places, but he hasn't kept them. He's sensitive—quite naturally. Seems to fancy everybody's down on him.

*James.* Bad sign. Don't like the fellow—never did from the first. "Weak character",s written all over him.

*Walter.* I think we owe him a leg up.

*James.* He brought it all on himself.

*Walter.* The doctrine of full responsibility doesn't quite hold in these days.

*James.* *(Rather grimly)* You'll find it safer to hold it for all that, my boy.

*Walter.* For oneself, yes—not for other people, thanks.

*James.* Well! I do not want to be hard.

*Cokeson.* I'm glad to hear you say that. He seems to see something *(spreading his arms)* round him. 'Tisn't healthy.

*James.* What about the woman he was mixed up with? I saw someone uncommonly like her outside as we came in.

*Cokeson.* That! Well, I can't keep anything from you. He has met her.

*James.* Is she with her husband?

*Cokeson.* No.

*James.* Falder living with her, I suppose?

*Cokeson.* *(Desperately trying to retain new-found jollity)* I don't know that of my own knowledge. 'Tisn't my business.



*Cokeson.* Just a word, Mr. James. (*To Falder*) You please go to the junior clerks' office. He is not coming this morning. His wife has been delivered of a baby today.

*Falder goes in the clerks' office.)*

*Cokeson.* I want to tell you, sir, that Falder is highly penitent. All the people are now prejudiced against him. You have caught him in a very hard situation. He is half-starving. It is a hard plight to go without one's dinner.

*James.* Is it that, Mr. Cokeson ?

*Cokeson.* I wanted to ask you, if you could give him a chance. He has had his punishment. We know all about him and we need a clerk. A young fellow has applied for the post but I have kept him waiting.

*James.* Do you recommend a convict for this office ? I don't understand your point.

*Walter.* I still remember the counsel's remark that the rolling wheels of the chariot of justice will keep on rolling for ever.

*James.* I don't feel that I am to blame for it. What has he been doing since his release ?

*Cokeson.* He has had one or two jobs but he could not stick to them. He is a very nervous and sensitive type of man. He felt that everybody was mocking at him.

*James.* This is bad psychology. I don't like him, in fact never liked him from the beginning. He gives the impression of a weak character from every angle.

*Walter.* I think we are morally bound to help him up.

*James.* He himself was responsible for all that.

*Walter.* In these days the full load of responsibility of any action cannot be laid on one single person.

*James.* Well, you hold whatever views you deem fit.

*Walter.* Yes, at least for myself, if not for others.

*James.* Well, I don't want to be hard with him.

*Cokeson.* I am glad to learn this. He seems to feel that people around him are to press him down. This is very serious.

*James.* What about the woman with whom he was involved. I saw a woman exactly like her at the door outside.

*Cokeson.* Well, I can't conceal anything for you. He has met her.

*James.* Does she live with her husband ?

*Cokeson.* No.

*James.* Is Falder living with her ?

*Cokeson.* I don't have any informatinn. This is no business of mine, in fact.



*James.* It's *our* business, if we're going to engage him, Cokeson.

*Cokeson.* (*Reluctantly*) I ought to tell you, perhaps. I've had the party here this morning.

*James.* I thought so. (*To Walter*) No my dear boy, it won't do. Too shady altogether !

*Cokeson.* The two things together make it very awkward for you—I see that.

*Walter.* (*Tentatively*) I don't quite know what we have to do with his private life.

*James.* No, no ! He must make a clean sheet of it, or he can't come here.

*Walter.* Poor devil !

*Cokeson.* Will you have him in ? (*And as James nods*) I think I can get him to see reason.

*James.* (*Grimly*) You can leave that to me, Cokeson.

*Walter.* (*To James in a low voice, while Cokeson is summoning Falder*) His whole future may depend on what we do, dad.

(*Falder comes in. He has pulled himself together, and presents a steady front.*)

*James.* Now look here, Falder. My son and I want to give you another chance ; but there are two things I must say to you. In the first place : It's no good coming here as a victim. If you've any notion that you've been unjustly treated—get rid of it. You can't play fast and loose with morality and hope to go scot-free. If society didn't take care of itself, nobody would—the sooner you realize that the better.

*Falder.* Yes, sir ; but—may I say something ?

*James.* Well ?

*Falder.* I had a lot of time to think it over in prison. (*He stops.*)

*Cokeson.* (*Encouraging him*) I'm sure you did.

*Falder.* There were all sorts there. And what I mean sir, is that if we'd been treated differently the first time, and put under somebody that could look after us a bit, and not put in prison, not a quarter of us would ever have got there.

*James.* (*Shaking his head*) I'm afraid I've very grave doubts of that, Falder.

*Falder* (*With a gleam of malice*) Yes, sir, so I found.

*James.* My good fellow, don't forget that you began it.

*Falder.* I never wanted to do wrong.

*James.* Perhaps not. But you did.



*James.* This should be our business to enquire if we are going to employ him.

*Cokeson.* I ought to tell you, sir, that she called on me this morning.

*James.* I though so (*To Walter.*) Well, my son, that won't do. The whole affair is so black.

*Cokeson.* Yes, these two things together make a hard situation for you to reconcile.

*Walter.* I don't know what we have to do with his private life.

*James.* No, no. He must do away with her, otherwise he can't be taken here.

*Walter.* Poor young man !

*Cokeson.* Will you like to call him in ? I think I can persuade him.

*James.* Well, Cokeson, you leave that to me.

*Walter.* Father, his whole future depends on what we decide for him.

(Falder comes in. By now he has collected himself and appears steadily.

*James.* Well Falder, look, my son and I have prepared to give you another chance in the office. But I have to say two things in this connection. In the first place, it is not desirable for you to think that you have been unjustly victimized. Wipe out the idea, if you have any, that you have been unjustly punished. You can't stake morality and go unpunished. Society has to guard itself against offenders. You have to realize this point of vital importance.

*Falder.* Yes, sir, but will you permit me to say something ?

*James.* What is that ?

*Falder.* I have thought over it for a long time in the prison.

*Cokeson.* Yes, you must have.

*Falder.* There were all sorts of convicts in the prison. I mean to say, sir, that if they had been treated sympathetically at the time of the commission of the first offence, and put under the supervision of a considerate guardian instead of being sent to prison, not a quarter of the convicts would have been in the prison.

*James.* I am very doubtful about it, Falder.

*Falder.* Yes, sir, but this is what I found.

*James.* But, Falder, don't forget that you were responsible for all that.

*Falder.* I never meant to offend anybody.

*James.* May be, but you did.



*Falder.* (With all the bitterness of his past suffering) It's knocked me out of time. (Pulling himself up.) That is, I mean, I'm not what I was.

*James.* This isn't encouraging for us, Falder.

*Cokeson.* He's putting it awkwardly, Mr. James.

*Falder.* (Throwing over his caution from the intensity of his feeling) I mean it, Mr. Cokeson.

*James.* Now, lay aside all those thoughts, Falder, and look to the future.

*Falder.* (Almost eagerly) Yes, sir, but you don't understand what prison is. It's here it gets you.

(He grips his chest.

*Cokeson.* (In a whisper to James) I told you he wanted nourishment.

*Walter.* Yes, but, my dear fellow, that'll pass away. Time's merciful.

*Falder.* (With his face twitching) I hope so, sir.

*James.* (Much more gently) Now, my boy, what you've got to do is to put all the past behind you and build yourself up a steady reputation. And that brings me to the second thing. This woman you were mixed up with—you must give us your word, you know, to have done with that. There's no chance of your keeping straight if you're going to begin your future with such a relationship.

*Falder.* (Looking from one to the other with a hunted expression) But, sir .....but, sir.....it's the one thing I looked forward to all that time. And she too.....I couldn't find her before last night.

(During this and what follows *Cokeson* becomes more and more uneasy.

*James.* This is painful, Falder. But you must see for yourself that it's impossible for a firm like this to close its eyes to everything. Give us this proof of your resolve to keep straight, and you can come back—not otherwise.

*Falder.* (After staring at James, suddenly stiffens himself) I couldn't give her up. I couldn't! Oh, sir! I'm all she's got to look to. And I'm sure she's all I've got.

*James.* I'm very sorry, Falder, but I must be firm. It's for the benefit of you both in the long run. No good can come of this connection. It was the cause of all your disaster.

*Falder.* But, sir, it means—having gone through all that—getting broken up—my nerves are in an awful state—for nothing. I did it for her.

*James.* Come! If she's anything of a woman she'll see it for herself. She won't want to drag you down further. If there were a prospect of your being able to marry her—it might be another thing.



*Falder.* The atrocities of the prison have completely shattered me. I am not really what I was.

*James.* This is rather discouraging, Falder.

*Cokeson.* He is only talking awkwardly, he does not mean it.

*Falder.* But, Mr. Cokeson, I mean it.

*James.* Well, forget all that, and look to your future.

*Falder.* Yes, sir, but you don't have any experience of prison life. It strikes the heart.

*Cokeson.* I told you, sir, he is underfed.

*Walter.* Yes, but that will pass away, Falder. Time is a great healer.

*Falder.* I hope so, sir.

*James.* Now my boy, what is necessary for you is to forget all the past and build for yourself an honourable future. And now I come to the second point. You must promise that you will completely break off from the woman with whom you were involved. There is no chance of your living an honest and pure life if you continue to hold your old relations with that woman.

*Falder.* But, sir, this is the only thing I looked forward to all that time, and she as well. And I could find her only the last night.

*James.* This is a matter for great pity, Falder. But you will realize yourself that we, in the interest of the firm, cannot close our eyes to everything. Give us your undertaking that you will live a pure life, and you can come back to our firm—not otherwise.

*Falder.* I cannot give her up, sir. I simply cannot. I am her only hope and aspiration, and so is she to me.

*James.* I am very sorry, Falder, but I have got to be strict. It is, of course, in the interest of both of you. Nothing good can come out of such a relationship. It was the cause of all your trouble so far.

*Falder.* But, sir, it means I have suffered all this for nothing. I risked everything for her sake.

*James.* Well, if she is a reasonable woman she will herself look to it. She won't like to be the cause of your fall again. If however, there were prospects of your marriage, things would have been different.



*Falder.* It's not my fault, sir, that she couldn't get rid of him—she would have if she could. That's been the whole trouble from the beginning. (*Looking suddenly at Walter.*)...If anybody would help her! It's only money wanted now, I'm sure.

*Cokeson.* (*Breaking in, as Walter hesitates, and is about to speak*) I don't think we need consider that—it's rather farfetched.

*Falder.* (*To Walter, appealing*) He must have given her full cause since; she could prove that he drove her to leave him.

*Walter.* I'm inclined to do what you say, Falder, if it can be managed.

*Falder.* Oh, sir! (*He goes to the window and looks down into the street.*)

*Cokeson.* (*Hurriedly*) You don't take me, Mr. Walter, I have my reasons.

*Falder.* (*From the window*) She's down there, sir. Will you see her? I can beckon to her from here.

(*Walter hesitates, and looks from Cokeson to James.*)

*James.* (*With a sharp nod*) Yes, let her come.

(*Falder beckons from the window.*)

*Cokeson.* (*In a low fluster to James and Walter*) No, Mr. James. She's not been quite what she ought to ha' been while this young man's been away. She's lost her chance. We can't consult how to swindle the Law.

(*Falder has come from the window. The three men look at him in a sort of awed silence.*)

*Falder.* (*With instinctive apprehension of some change—looking from one to the other*) There's been nothing between us, sir, to prevent it.....What I said at the trial was true. And last night we only just sat in the Park.

(*Sweedle comes in from the outer office.*)

*Cokeson.* What is it?

*Sweedle.* Mrs. Honeywill.

(*There is silence.*)

*James.* Show her in.

*Ruth* comes slowly in, and stands stoically with *Falder* on one side and the three men on the other. No one speaks. *Cokeson* turns to his table, bending over his papers as though the burden of the situation were forcing him back into his accustomed groove.

*James.* (*Sharply*) Shut the door there. (*Sweedle shuts the door.*) We've asked you to come up because there are certain facts to be faced in this matter. I understand you have only just met Falder again.

*Ruth.* Yes—only yesterday.



*Falder.* I am not responsible for that, sir, if she has not been able to get legal divorce from him. She would have got it, if it were possible. This has been the tragedy from the beginning. If anybody could help her to get a divorce, it would be a great favour. It is now only a question of money.

*Cokeson.* We can't consider any such proposal. It is beyond us.

*Falder.* (To Walter in an appealing manner.) He must have given her full cause by now to get legal divorce. She can prove that he compelled her to live separate from him.

*Walter.* I am prepared to help you, Falder, if it is possible.

*Falder.* Thank you very much, sir.

*Cokeson.* You don't understand me, Mr. Walter. I have my reasons to oppose such a plan.

*Falder.* She is waiting outside, sir. Shall I call her?

*James.* Well, let her come.

*Cokeson.* Mr. James, she has not been living a pure life during this young man's absence. She has no chance, I am sure. We can't defy law.

(Falder comes back from near the window. The three men look at him seriously and silently.)

*Falder.* There has been nothing immoral between us. What I said at the time of trial is still true. And last night we had only a little time in the Park.

(*Sweedle enters.*)

*Cokeson.* Yes, what is the matter?

*Sweedle.* There is Mrs. Honeywill, sir.

*James.* Let her come in.

(Ruth comes slowly in, and stands firmly between Falder on one side and other men on the other side. There is silence. Cokeson turns to his table, looks into his papers, though he cannot prevent his eyes from turning to Ruth again and again.)

*James.* (*Sharply*) Shut the door there (*Sweedle shuts the door*). We have asked you to come up because there are certain facts to be faced in this matter. I understand you have only just met Falder again.

*Ruth.* Yes—only yesterday.



*James.* He's told us about himself, and we're very sorry for him. I've promised to take him back here if he'll make a fresh start. (*Looking steadily at Ruth.*) This is a matter that requires courage, ma'am.

(*Ruth who is looking at Falder, begins to twist her hands in front of her as though prescient of disaster.*)

*Falder.* Mr. Walter How is good enough to say that he'll help us to get a divorce.

(*Ruth flashes a startled glance at James and Walter.*)

*James.* I don't think that's practical, Falder.

*Falder.* But, sir.....!

*James.* (*Steadily*) Now, Mrs. Honeywill. You're fond of him.

*Ruth.* Yes, sir ; I love him. (*She looks miserably at Falder.*)

*James.* Then you don't want to stand in his way, do you ?

*Ruth.* (*In a faint voice*) I could take care of him.

*James.* The best way you can take care of him will be to give him up.

*Falder.* Nothing shall make me give you up. You can get a divorce. There's been nothing between us, has there ?

*Ruth.* (*Mournfully shaking her head—without looking at him*) No.

*Falder.* We'll keep apart till it's over, sir ; if you'll only help us—we promise.

*James.* (*To Ruth*) You see the thing plainly, don't you ? You see what I mean ?

*Ruth.* (*Just above a whisper*) Yes.

*Cokeson.* (*To himself*) There's a dear woman.

*James.* The situation is impossible.

*Ruth.* Must I, sir ?

*James.* (*Forcing himself to look at her*) I put it to you, ma'am. His future is in your hands.

*Ruth.* (*Miserably*) I want to do the best for him.

*James.* (*A little huskily*) That's right, that's right !

*Falder.* I don't understand. You're not going to give me up .....after all this ? There's something—(*Starting forward to James.*) Sir, I swear solemnly there's been nothing between us.

*James.* I believe you, Falder. Come, my lad, be as plucky as she is.

*Falder.* Just now you were going to help up. (*He stares at Ruth, who is standing absolutely still ; his face and hands twitch and quiver as the truth dawns on him.*) What is it ? You've not been.....

*Walter.* Father !



*James.* He has told us about himself, and we are very sorry for him. I have promised to take him back in my firm provided he makes a fresh start. *(Looking steadily at Ruth.)*

*(Ruth, who is looking at Falder, begins to twist her hands in front of her as though anticipating some danger.)*

*Falder.* Mr. Walter has kindly promised to help us in getting the divorce. *(Ruth flashes a startled glance at James and Walter.)*

*James.* I don't think that is practicable, Falder.

*Falder.* But, sir —

*James.* Well, Mrs. Honeywill, you love him very much.

*Ruth.* Yes, sir, I love him very deeply.

*James.* In that case, you would not like to stand in the way of his progress.

*Ruth.* I am prepared to do anything for him.

*James.* The best way in which you can help him is to give him up.

*Falder.* I can never give you up. You can get a divorce from your husband. There has been no immoral dealing between us.

*Ruth.* No, there has been nothing immoral.

*Falder.* We are prepared to live apart from each other until the divorce has been allowed, sir. If you could help us in the matter, sir.

*James.* *(To Ruth.)* You see plainly what I mean.

*Ruth.* Yer, sir.

*Cokeson.* *(To himself.)* She is a dear woman.

*James.* There is no other help possible.

*Ruth.* Must I give him up, sir ?

*James.* It is up to you, madam, his future is in your hands.

*Ruth.* *(Miserable.)* I shall do the best I can for him.

*James.* *(little huskily.)* Yes, that is right.

*Falder.* I don't understand. You are not going to give me up, I am sure. I swear, sir, there has not been any immoral dealings between us.

*James.* I quite believe you. But you should be as bold as she is.

*Falder.* *(To Walter)* Just now you promised to help us.

*Walter.* Father.



*James. (Hurriedly)* There, there ! That'll do, that'll do ! I'll give you your chance, Falder. Don't let me know what you do with yourselves, that's all.

*Falder. (As if he has not heard)* Ruth ?

*(Ruth looks at him ; and Falder covers his face with his hands. There is silence.*

*Cokeson. (Suddenly)* There's someone out there. *(To Ruth)* Go in here. You'll feel better by yourself for a minute.

*(He points to the clerks' room and moves towards the outer office. Falder does not move. Ruth puts out her hand timidly. He shrinks back from the touch. She turns and goes miserably into the clerks' room. With a brusque movement he follows, seizing her by the shoulder just inside the doorway. Cokeson shuts the door.*

*James. (Pointing to the outer office)* Get rid of that, whoever, it is.

*Sweedle. (Opening the office door, in a scared voice)* Detective Sergeant Wister

*(The detective enters and closes the door behind him.*

*Wister.* Sorry to disturb you, sir. A clerk you had here, two years and a half ago I arrested him in this room.

*James.* What about him ?

*Wister* I thought perhaps I might get his whereabouts from you. *(There is an awkward silence.*

*Cokeson. (Pleasantly, coming to the rescue)* We're not responsible for his movements ; you know that.

*James.* What do you want with him ?

*Wister.* He's failed to report himself lately.

*Walter.* Has he to keep in touch with the police then ?

*Wister.* We're bound to know his whereabouts. I dare say we shouldn't interfere, sir, but we've just heard there's a serious matter of obtaining employment with a forged reference. What with the two things together—we must have him.

*(Again there is silence. Walter and Cokeson steal glances at James who stands staring steadily at the detective.*

*Cokeson. (Expansively)* We're very busy at the moment. If you could make it convenient to call again we might be able to tell you then.

*James. (Decisively)* I'm a servant of the law, but I dislike poaching. In fact, I can't do such a thing. If you want him you must find him without us.

*(As he speaks, his eye falls on Falder's cap still lying on the table, and his face contracts.*



*James.* Well, that will do. I will give you another chance, Falder. Don't let me know what you do with yourself.

*Falder.* And what do you say, Ruth ?

*Cokeson.* There is somebody outside there. (*To Ruth.*) Will you go there in the other room ? You will feel more comfortable together there.

(*Cokeson points to the clerks' room, and he himself moves towards the outer office. Falder keeps standing, Ruth advances her hand toward him. He fears to touch her hand. She turns and goes to the clerks' room, gloomily. With a jerk he follows her, seizing her by the shoulder just inside the doorway. Cokeson closes the door.*)

*James.* Try to dismiss the man who has come to meet us.

*Sweedle.* Sir, he is the Detective-Sergeant, Wister.

(*Wister enters*)

*Wister.* I am sorry to have disturbed you, sir. You had a clerk here about two years and a half ago. I arrested him in this room.

*James.* What have you to do about him now ?

*Wister.* I thought that I could get information about his address from you.

*Cokeson.* You know, we are not responsible for his movements now.

*James.* What you have to do with him.

*Wister.* He has not reported himself at the police station for these few days.

*Walter.* Is he required to report himself to the police even now.

*Wister.* We are bound to keep information about his whereabouts. We have no need to interfere with his affairs, but we have heard that he got employment somewhere with a forged letter of introduction. On the basis of both these things we have to arrest him again.

(*There is a silence again. Walter and Cokeson stealthily look at each other and at James. James looks steadily at Wister, the detective.*)

*Cokeson.* We are very busy at this time. If you could come some other time, we might be able to help you.

*James.* (*Decisively*) I am a servant of the Law, but I dislike to chase a person. If you want him, you have to find him out yourself without our help,

(*Wister's eye falls on Falder's cap lying on the table.*)



*Wister.* (*Nothing the gesture—quietly*) Very good, sir. I ought to warn you that sheltering—

*James.* I shelter no one. But you mustn't come here and ask questions which it's not my business to answer.

*Wister.* (*Dryly*) I won't trouble you further then, gentlemen.

*Cokeson.* I'm sorry we couldn't give you the information. You quite understand, don't you? Good morning!

(*Wister turns to go, but instead of going to the door of the outer office he goes to the door of the clerks' room.*)

*Cokeson.* The other door...the other door!

*Wister* opens the clerks' door. *Ruth's* voice is heard: "Oh do" and *Falder's*: "I can't!" There is a little pause; then, with sharp fright, *Ruth* says: "Who's that?" *Wister* has gone in.

(*The three men look aghast at the door.*)

*Wister.* (*From within*) Keep back, please!

(*He comes swiftly out with his arm twisted in Falder's. The latter gives a white, staring look at the three men:*)

*Walter.* Let him go this time, for God's sake!

*Wister.* I couldn't take the responsibility, sir.

*Falder.* (*With a queer, desperate laugh*) Good!

(*Flinging a look back at Ruth, he throws up his head, and goes out through the outer office, half dragging Wister after him.*)

*Walter.* (*With despair*) That finishes him. It'll go on forever now.

*Sweedle* can be seen staring through the outer door. There are sounds of footsteps descending the stone stairs: suddenly a dull thud, a faint "My God!" in *Wister's* voice.

*James.* What's that!

*Sweedle* dashes forward. The door swings behind him. There is dead silence.

*Walter.* (*Starting forward to the inner room*) The woman—she's fainting!

(*He and Cokeson support the fainting Ruth from the door way of the clerks' room.*)

*Cokeson.* (*Distracted*) Here, my dear! There, there!

*Walter.* Have you any brandy?

*Cokeson.* I've got sherry.

*Walter.* Get it, then. Quick!

(*He places Ruth in a chair—which James has dragged forward.*)

*Cokeson.* (*With sherry*) Here! It's good strong sherry.



Wister. Right sir, but I should warn you that it is a serious crime to shelter criminals.

James. I shelter no criminals. But you should not come to our office to ask questions with which we have nothing to do.

Wister. I won't trouble you any more then.

Cokeson. I am sorry we could not give you any information about him. You understand our position, I am sure.

*(Walter turns to go but walks towards the clerks' room.)*

Cokeson. You have to go by the other door, sir.

*(Wister opens the clerks' room and discovers Ruth and Falder.)*

Wister. Stand still, sir.

*(Wister comes out holding Falder by the arm. Falder looks at the three men with blank looks.)*

Walter. Let him go this time please.

Wister. I am not prepared to take the responsibility, sir.

Falder. Good, this is justice.

*(Falder looks back at Ruth, and throwing up his head he goes out through the outer office, almost dragging Wister after him.)*

Walter. This will be the finish of him. This soulless mechanical process of law will now go on for ever.

James. *(Hearing the sound of some heavy fall)* What is that?

Walter. Ruth has fainted.

Cokeson. O dear, dear woman.

Walter. Is there any brandy?

Cokeson. I have got some Sherry.

Walter. Let me have it quickly.

*(Ruth is placed in a chair.)*

Cokeson. It is a good wine. *(They force the Sherry in her mouth.)*



*(They try to force the Sherry between her lips.*

*(There is the sound of feet, and they stop to listen.*

*(The outer door is reopened—Wister and Sweedle are seen carrying some burden.*

*James. (Hurrying forward) What is it ?*

*(They lay the burden down in the outer office, out of sight and all but Ruth cluster round it, speaking in hushed voices.*

*Wister. He jumped—neck's broken.*

*Walter. Good God !*

*Wister. He must have been made to think he could give me the slip like that. And what was it—just a few months !*

*Walter. (Bitterly) Was that all ?*

*James. What a desperate thing ! (Then in, a voice unlike his own) Run for a doctor—you ! (Sweedle rushes from the outer office.) An ambulance !*

*(Wister goes out. On Ruth's face an expression of fear and horror has been seen growing, as if she dared not turn towards the voices. She now rises and steals towards them.*

*Walter. (Turning suddenly) Look !*

*(The three men shrink back out of her way. Ruth drops on her knees by the body.*

*Ruth. (In a whisper) What is it ? He's not breathing. (She crouches over him) My dear ! My pretty !*

*(In the outer office doorway the figures of men are seen standing.*

*Ruth. (Leaping to her feet) No, no ! No, no ! He's dead.*

*(The figures of the men shrink back.*

*Cokeson. (Stealing forward. In a hoarse voice) There, there poor dear woman !*

*(At the sound behind her Ruth faces round at him.*

*Cokeson. No one'll touch him now ! Never again ! He's safe with gentle Jesus !*

*(Ruth stands as though turned to stone in the doorway staring at Cokeson, who, bending humbly before her, holds out his hand as one would to a lost dog,*

*(The curtain falls.)*





(A sound of feet is heard. They all turn to listen. The outer door is opened again. Wister and Sweedle appear carrying a burden.

*James.* (*Seeing a man carried up.*) What is this ?

(They bring up their burden, and lay down Falder in a heap in the outer office. Ruth rushes forward and holds him in her arms, murmuring in a hushed voice.

*Wister.* He tried to jump and run away. He has broken his neck.

*Walter.* O God !

*Wister.* He must have been mad to think he could give me the slip like that. And that when it was just a matter of just a few months.

*Walter.* Was that all, indeed ?

*James.* It was a desperate step. Call in the doctor soon—you (*Sweedle rushes from the outer office.*) An ambulance.

(Wister goes out. On Ruth's face an expression of fear and horror has been seen growing, as if she dared not turn towards the voice. She now rises and steals towards them.

*Walter.* (*Turning suddenly.*) Look, here.

*Ruth falls down on the body of Falder.*

*Ruth.* What is this ? He is not breathing at all. My dear, dear Falder is not breathing. No no, don't come forward to arrest him now. He is dead.

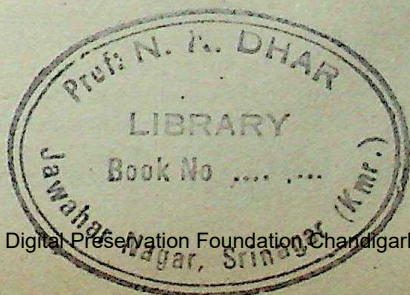
*Cokeson.* (*Stealing forward. In a hoarse voice.*) There, there poor dear woman.

(*At the sound behind her Ruth faces round at him.*

*Cokeson.* O poor woman ! Nobody will now touch him. Nobody can ever touch him now. He has found shelter in the bosom of God.

(Ruth stands as if turned to stone. She looks at Cokeson, who bends on his knees before her, and advances his hand towards her, as one would towards a lost dog.

(*The curtain falls.*)





## DETAILED SUMMARY OF THE PLAY

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### ACT I

The play opens in Cokeson's room. Cokeson is a managing clerk in the office of the solicitors, James How and his son Walter How. He is a man of sixty, wearing spectacles, rather short, with a bald head and an honest face. He is seated at his table, and is adding up figures in a bank pass-book. The room is old-fashioned and is furnished with old mahogany and leather. It has three doors. One door leads to the outer office ; another leads to the junior clerks' room ; and the third door leads to the partners' room. The time is a July morning.

Sweedle, the office boy, enters there through the outer office door. He is a pale youth of sixteen. He tells Cokeson that there is a 'party' who desires to see Falder, the junior clerk. Falder is not there. However, Cokeson after learning from Sweedle that the 'party' is a woman of no great pretence, permits her to come in.

The party is nobody else but Ruth Honeywill. She is a tall and pretty woman of twenty-six. Cokeson tells her that Falder is out and asks her to state her business. Ruth says that it is a private matter. Cokeson tells her that private callers are not allowed there, and advises her to leave a message.

Ruth is anxious to meet Falder. She had been to Falder's private address. But she did not find him at his private address either. So she informs Cokeson that her meeting with Falder is a matter of life and death, and that she has come there with her two children waiting outside.

At this moment Falder enters. He is a pale, good-looking young man. He is twenty-three years of age. He is a junior clerk in the office of James and Walter How. Cokeson allows the young people a minute for themselves, and leaves the room through the partners' door. Ruth has a tragic tale to tell. Her husband was on the drink again. He tried to cut her throat the previous night. She came out with her children before he was awake. She tells Falder that she would not dream of going back to her house again, even for getting the things that belong to her and her children. Falder informs her that everything is ready for the night. He asks her to meet him



at the booking office at 11-45 that night. Falder and Ruth cling together passionately in a kiss, and they fly apart as Cokeson re-enters. Ruth goes out through the outer office.

Cokeson admonishes Falder for making improper use of the office premises and gives him a religious pamphlet, "Purity in the Home". He next cautions the junior clerk about the work he has been neglecting for private life. Falder goes into his room, and Cokeson is just setting down to write, when Walter How comes in through the outer office. Walter is a refined-looking man of thirty-five, with a pleasant voice. He is the son of James How.

While Cokeson and Walter are discussing some legal cases, James How comes in from the partners' room. James is a shortish man, with plentiful grey hair and shrewd eyes. Cokeson goes out into Falder's room taking Boutler's lease to him to draft the instructions.

James asks his son how it is that there is only £ 351 as the firm's balance, while he (Walter) said that it was over four hundred just the day before. Walter produces the cheque-book and they verify the entries in the counterfoils. The shrewd eyes of James fall on the figure 'ninety' and he asks his son what it is. It was a cheque drawn by Walter on Friday the 7th July. But he drew only pounds nine, not ninety. James now has a look at the cheque for ninety and asks his son if the 'ty' is his. Walter replies that it is not his for his 'y's' curl back a little. He also tells his father that he gave the cheque to Cokeson.

As Cokeson re-enters from Falder's room, James asks him if he remembers cashing a cheque for Walter last Friday week. Cokeson replies that he did cash a cheque and that it was for nine pounds. James hands him the cheque-book. Cokeson is surprised. He says that he gave the cheque to Davis and Davis brought the amount back, all notes. Cokeson verifies other cheques and is unable to find any having the word 'nine'.

James' suspicion is centred on Davis, who sailed for Australia on Monday. It seems to be deliberate and clever case of swindling, for the counterfoil too was altered. He suggests that they should wire and have Davis arrested at Naples. Cokeson is very much upset. He feels sad for young Davis and his poor wife.

James asks his son to bring the cashier of the bank there, and ring up Scotland Yard. He is worried that such a felony should be committed in that respectable office of theirs, and Cokeson is worried for young Davis.

James goes towards the partners' room and Ruth enters through the outer-office door. She has come there to speak to Falder just for one minute, as she says. But Cokeson sends her away stating that she can speak to Falder when he goes for his lunch. Walter, entering with the cashier, passes Ruth as she leaves the office.

Walter goes into the partners' room. Cokeson and the cashier, one Mr. Cowley, indulge in talk concerning the cheque. Cowley says



that the man who came with the cheque was quite a young man, and that he can recognize his face very easily. Just then James enters with his son and asks the cashier if anybody among those who are now there cashed the cheque. He says that none of them cashed the cheque.

James then goes towards Falder's room. Cokeson urges on him not to disturb Falder who is a nervous fellow and who has already been upset since that morning. James states that the matter must be thoroughly cleared up. He opens Falder's room and asks him to bring in the papers of Boutler's lease.

The sight of Cowley makes Falder nervous. He, however, advances with papers, puts them before James, goes back in his room and shuts the door. The bank cashier, Mr. Cowley, informs James that this was the young man who had cashed the cheque. Falder is called in by James to show him the cheque, and asks him if he knew about that cheque. Falder replies in the negative. James asks the young man to look at it more carefully for it is the cheque cashed by him last Friday. Falder examines the cheque and says that he did cash it. He states that it was given to him by Davis to whom he gave back the cash.

James next asks Falder if the cheque was exactly like that when Davis gave it to him. Falder says it was so. Walter then asks him if the cheque was cashed for nine or ninety pounds. Falder replies that it was drawn for ninety. James repeats it was for nine and tells Falder that the cheque was altered. He further tells him that it was the doing of either Davis or Falder. Falder fumbles a little and then replies that it was not done by him.

Walter then says something to his father in a low voice. James then says that the counterfoil was altered either on Tuesday or after because Walter, with whom the cheque-book remained, returned only on Tuesday. Davis sailed on Monday as they all know.

James asks Falder how he accounts for all these facts and if he still denies that he was the man who altered both the cheque and the counterfoil. Falder thus is cornered. He at last confesses his offence. He replies : "I wanted the money so badly. I did not know what I was doing. It was just a minute of madness." He promises to pay the money back. He is asked to go into his room, and he does so.

James is determined to prosecute Falder. Walder and Cokeson plead for the young man in vain. The senior solicitor, Mr. James considers the offence as a clear case of swindling. They cannot have such a man in their office nor can they allow him to be at large in society. It is evident that Falder is a man with dissolute habits, says James, and it is proved by his having immoral connections with a married woman.

Meanwhile, the detective, Sergeant Wister enters. Falder is asked to come out of his room. As he comes shrinkingly out, the detective grasps him by the arm. James tells the detective that he is charging



the young man with felony. Falder says that he did it for somebody else and requests James to let him be free till the next day. But James is unmoved. Falder goes out quietly in the detective's grip.

## ACT II

The scene is a court of law. Falder is seated in the large, solid dock with a warder on either side of him. The judge is seated exactly opposite to him. There is Harold Cleaver, the counsel for the Crown. There is Hactor Frome, the counsel for the defendant. Among the spectators, having already given their evidence, are James and Walter How, and Cowley, the cashier. Wister, the detective, has just finished giving evidence. The court is crowded with barristers, solicitors, reporters, ushers and jurymen. The time is foggy October afternoon.

Frome, the counsel for the defence, begins his arguments. He does not dispute the fact that Falder altered the cheque. He only wants to show that the prisoner was not responsible for his action at that time, considering the state of mind in which he then was. The prisoner did that in a moment of aberration, amounting to temporary insanity, caused by the violent distress under which he was labouring.

Frome continues his arguments—The prisoner (Falder) is only twenty-three. The events that led up to this act may be heard from a woman, who has inspired the prisoner with a tragic infatuation, and who has been leading a miserable life with her husband, a drunkard, who habitually ill-treats her and from whom she actually goes in terror of her life. She set all her hopes on the prisoner; and she saw a way out of her misery by going with him to another country, where they might pass as husband and wife. For that purpose they required money, but—they had none. As to the actual events of the morning of July 7th, on which the cheque was altered, the events on which he (Frome) relies to prove the defendants' irresponsibility, he shall allow the events to speak for themselves, through the lips of his witness.

The first witness is Robert Cokeson. He informs the court that the prisoner had been in the employment of the firm, James and Walter How, for nearly two years. In his opinion Falder is a nice, pleasant-spoken young man, who never gave any reason to suspect his honesty before that offence of forgery, which came as a surprise. As to the prisoner's demeanour on the morning of the 7th July he was not quite composed; he was jumpy at the time. On the morning on which the discovery of the forgery was made, a woman came to the office and desired to see Falder, who was out then. She told Cokeson that she came to meet the young man (Falder) on "a matter of life and death."

After Frome's examination, Cleaver cross-examines Cokeson. To a question of Cleaver, Cokeson replies that the day was hot when Falder had his collar unbuttoned, and he buttoned it when his attention was drawn to it. Cleaver sits down. Hastily Frome rises and asks



Cokeson if he had ever found Falder in such a dishevelled state before. Cokeson replies that the young man was always clean and quiet.

The next witness is Ruth Honeywill. She is examined by Frome. She says that she is a married woman aged twenty-six who has not been living with her husband since July ; that she has two children who are living with her. She further states that the prisoner and herself are lovers, but with no sexual relations so far ; that her husband was a traveller and ill-treated her in all sorts of ways. She says that Falder offered to take her out of it ; that she and Falder intended going to South America ; and that they were prevented from doing so by Falder's arrest, which very nearly broke her heart.

To the other questions of Frome, Ruth replies that she remembers the morning of July 7th, for on that morning her husband nearly strangled her ; that she just managed to get away from him and went straight to Falder ; that she told her friend what had happened and it upset him greatly. She further says that Falder never spoke to her about any cheque, but she was surprised that her friend had money to give her ; that he appeared very dumb-like as though some fate were hanging over him. She says that she loves Falder very much and he loves her equally greatly ; that she thinks that her danger and unhappiness would seriously affect his balance ; his control over his actions, and even his reason ; that he was dreadfully upset that Friday morning and that she still loves Falder.

Cleaver asks her only one question. Would she say that Falder was out of his mind when she left him on the morning of Friday the 7th. Ruth replies that she would not say so. The Judge also asks her a few questions. To a remark of the Judge, Ruth says that she does glory in her affection for the prisoner because it is the only thing in her life now.

The next witness is Falder himself. During the course of the examination Falder states that he is not married, and that he has known Ruth for six months. Her account of the relationship between them is a correct one. He became devotedly attached to her though he knew she was a married woman. He came to know about her through his married sister. He knew that Ruth was very unhappy with her husband.

Frome next asks Falder to tell the Jury what happened on the morning of Friday, July the 7th. Falder replies that Ruth came to him in a very miserable condition : that her sight almost frightened him ; and that he was unable to bear it. He was thinking what he could do and therefore he could not fix his mind on anything. When Davis gave him the cheque it just flashed across his mind that if he put the 'ty' and the 'nought', there would be the money to get her away. After that he does not remember what he did till he pushed the cheque through to the cashier under the rail. From the time Davis gave him the cheque to the time he cashed it, it was less than four



minutes because he ran all the distance. During these four minutes he remembers only that he ran. He does not even remember adding the 'ty' and the 'nought'.

Now Cleaver interrogates Falder and learns from him that the prisoner remembers nothing except that he ran. He was half frantic all that morning, that it was a mere accident that the 'ty' and the 'naught' were so like the rest of the handwriting. He altered the counterfoil on Wednesday morning; and that this was not an accident. Although he felt like confessing his offence to his employers, but fear prevented him from doing so. The idea that suspicion would fall on Davis was thought by him only afterwards. If he had not been mad at the time he committed the offence, he should never have had the courage.

The evidence for the defence is closed. Frome now sums up his arguments. The prisoner committed the act of forgery in a moment when to all practical intents and purposes he was not responsible for his actions when he was in such mental and moral vacuity, arising from violent emotional agitation, as the sight of brutal violence disturbs everyone. It is easy to imagine the feelings of a young person like Falder, when he sees that brutal violence was inflicted on a woman whom he loves. It is clear from the face of the prisoner that he is neither strong nor vicious. He is just the sort of man who would easily become the prey of his emotions. Such a person should be acquitted of criminal intent and treated as a patient. Here is a case in which there is every reason to give the benefit of doubt. It is impossible for anybody to doubt his distress on the morning he committed the act. Such distress can make terrible havoc to weak and highly nervous people like the prisoner. "It was all the work of a moment. The rest has followed, as death follows stab to the heart." It is impossible for anybody to change what he has done. Once the cheque was altered and presented, the rest has been silence. His further acts, his failure to confess, the alteration in the counterfoil, his preparation for flight are all evidence merely of a weak character. Such persons as these should be treated not as criminals, but as patients. If the prisoner is found guilty and treated as a criminal, in all probability he will become one. If he is imprisoned as a criminal, then his whole life would be lost. Already he has been in prison for two months and his suffering as a result of it is clearly visible on his face. His suffering has already been greater than his criminal act.

Frome sits down. There is a stir in the Jury. Cleaver, the counsel for the crown, begins to sum up his arguments. He says that the defence set up by Frome is very flimsy and thin. It is evident from the words of the woman, the managing clerk and the prisoner himself that he was not mad between 1-10 and 1-15. A man may call himself mad during this short interval only for the sake of avoiding the consequences of an offence. The plea of insanity is therefore very unsound. In his (Cleaver's) opinion the Jury is bound to record a verdict of guilty.



Cleaver sits down. The Judge turns to the Jury and advises them to consider the case well. He says that they should bear in mind the general conduct of the prisoner before and after the act, and the evidence given by the several witnesses. He adds that the bearing of all this on the question of the premeditation, which implies sanity is evident. He further states that the Jury should not allow any considerations of youth and temptation to weigh with them in the findings of their verdict. He concludes with the words that before the Jury can come to a verdict 'guilty but insane' they must be thoroughly convinced that the condition of the prisoner's mind was such as would have qualified him at the moment for a lunatic asylum.

The Jury retire. Frome, on a suggestion from Falder, requests the Judge to tell the reporters not to disclose the name of the woman witness in the press report of these proceedings, for the consequences might be extremely serious to her. After some hesitation, the judge says that he will consider the application.

Meanwhile the Jury return. They unanimously find the prisoner guilty. Frome desires to speak again but the Judge does not permit him to say anything more. The prisoner is asked if he has anything to say why the court should not give him judgement according to law. Falder has nothing to say. The judge after mentioning how he was compelled to differ with the plea of the defence, gives the judgement of penal servitude to the prisoner for three years.

Ruth stands up suddenly as Falder is taken out by the warders. The Judge turns to the reporters and tells them that the name of the female witness should not be reported. He next turns to Ruth and tells her that her name will not be mentioned. Ruth, who is staring in the direction in which Falder has disappeared does not hear the words of the Judge. Cokeson draws her attention to the Judge. She turns, stares at the Judge, and turns away. The curtain falls as the Judge commences the trial of the next case.

### ACT III : SCENE I

The scene is a room in a prison, plainly furnished and having two large barred windows through which can be seen prisoners having their exercise in the yard. The Governor is standing near a writing table and looking at a sort of rough metal saw. The chief warder, Wooder, stands very upright at a distance. It is Christmas Eve.

Wooder, when asked, informs the Governor of the Jail that he found the saw in the mattress of the prisoner Moaney, an old hand, undergoing the fourth penal spell. Moaney had sawed the window bar about a quarter of an inch. He (Moaney) said that it occupied his mind. The Governor says that he will see him that afternoon. Wooder also informs the Governor that next to Moaney is O' Cleary, the Irishman. Next to the Irishman there is Falder, a star class, that is, a new prisoner. And next to Falder is old Clifton, the philosopher.



O' Cleary began banging on his door that morning, and that little thing was quite enough to upset the whole lot. Wooder remarks that prisoners are just like dumb animals at times.

The prison Chaplain now enters and he also looks at the curious saw. Wooder goes out. The Governor invites the Chaplain to dine with him the next day which is Christmas Day, and the Chaplain accepts the invitation. Wooder comes in and announces visitor. The Governor allows the visitor to come in. The visitor is Cokeson.

Cokeson tells the Governor that he has come to see Falder. The young man's sister came to him, and she was in some distress. Her husband would not allow her to go and see her brother, and her other sister is invalid. She asked Cokeson to come here and he did not like to refuse because he takes an interest in the young man. The Governor tells Cokeson that Falder is not yet allowed a visitor as he is undergoing one month's solitary confinement.

Cokeson tells the Governor that he saw Falder while he was shut up waiting for his trial and he felt very lonely and was in acute distress. The Governor sends for the prison doctor, and then turns to Cokeson and asks him if the prisoner is married. Cokeson replies that he is not married, but there is a party he is very much attached to. She had left her drunkard husband, who had been very cruel to her; she was about to go away with Falder. After the trial she said that she would earn her living by herself and wait for him to come out. That was a great consolation for Falder. But after a month she came to Cokeson, told him how she was unable to earn a living for herself and her children, and that she was determined to go to the workhouse. Cokeson advised her against such a decision and offered to help her a little. She did not like taking anything from him and said that she would go back to her husband. But he (Cokeson) did not persuade her not to do such a thing, although he knew that her husband was a cruel drunkard.

Cokeson further says that he wants things to be pleasant for Falder during the three years of his confinement. He is afraid that the young man may turn silly being all alone by himself. He would not keep even dogs in such a lonely and miserable state. If Falder is to be kept shut up by himself without any company, it will certainly do him harm.

Meanwhile the doctor has come in, and the Governor seeks his opinion concerning the state of the health of Falder, to whom, according to Cokeson, solitary confinement is doing harm. The doctor does not think that the solitary imprisonment is doing him any harm. The prisoner has not lost weight; he is nervous and melancholy; that is all. The Governor promises Cokeson that he will make a point of seeing the prisoner that day. He adds that if any sign of injury to his health shows itself, his case will be reported at once.



Cokeson leaves the place for the Governor has already told him that there can be no visitors to Falder. The Chaplain and the Doctor go out for lunch. The Governor sits down at his table and takes up a pen. And the curtain falls.

### ACT III : SCENE II

The scene is part of the ground corridor of the prison. The doors of four cells are visible. Each cell door has a little round peep hole which can be opened or closed by a hinged round disc.

The Warder Instructor is just emerging from one of the cells. While he is talking to the prisoner, O' Cleary, sound of approaching footsteps is heard. The Governor comes along followed by Wooder. On the Governor's inquiry, the Instructor reports that Q 3007 is behind with his work. The Governor visits Moaney and asks Moaney, holding up the saw if he has anything to say about it. Moaney replies that it passed the time. The Governor asks him, holding up the saw, if he has anything to say about it. Moaney replies that it passed his time. The Governor asks him if he will promise never to try it again if his offence is passed over. Moaney finds it difficult to make any such promise. He is ordered two days' cell and only bread and water. The Governor goes to the cell of Clipton. Clipton complains that his sleep is being disturbed by the man next to him, who makes it a habit to bang on the door of his cell repeatedly. The Governor goes to the cell of O' Cleary. On being questioned about his banging on the door the Irishman replies that he cannot always be the same steady man.

The Governor sends Wooder to the Doctor (Clements) and goes to the cell of Falder. As he opens the door, Falder, who is standing against it, lurches forward with a gasp. The Governor really feels sorry for Falder and advises him to pull together and try to forget the private affairs which have been afflicting him.

As Wooder and the Doctor approach, Falder is asked to go back into his cell. The Governor then asks the Doctor to go and see the prisoner. The Doctor does so and returns. He has nothing to report. The prisoner is nervous, and so are many others. He cannot differentiate him from others. The prisoner has not lost weight; there is nothing wrong with his eyes; his pulse is good; and he talks all right. The Governor asks Clements (the Doctor) if it does not amount to melancholia. The Doctor replies that if the Governor desires, a report can be made on the young man's state of health; but he will be compelled to make similar reports on the other prisoners also. Slowly and sadly the Governor walks, and the curtain falls.

### ACT III : SCENE III

The scene presents Falder in his solitary confinement in a narrow cell. He is in his stockings, standing motionless near the door in the posture of a man who is trying hard to bear something, any little



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thing that is going outside. He springs suddenly upright—as if at a sound—and remains perfectly motionless.

Then, with a heavy sigh, Falder moves to his work. He tries his hand at the work allotted to him, that of stitching buttonholes in shirts. He does a stitch or two, having the air of a man so lost in sadness that each stitch is, as it were, a coming to life. Soon he gives up the work, and begins pacing up and down the cell. He moves his head like an animal pacing its cage.

The light is fast fading. Falder stops again at the door. He tries to listen. He stops under the window. He makes some silly gestures and actions. He peeps into a tin as if trying to make a companion of his own face. It has grown very nearly dark.

Now the cell light behind the glass screen has been turned up. The cell is brightly lighted. Falder is seen gasping for breath. A distant sound as of dull beating on thick metal is suddenly audible. It becomes gradually louder and louder, and seems to reach Falder's cell. It seems to hypnotize him. He begins creeping nearer the door. Suddenly he raises his clenched fists. Panting violently, he flings himself at his door, and beats on it. And the curtain falls

## ACT IV

The scene is Cokeson's room. The time is a few minutes to ten of a March morning, two years later. Sweedle is alone and is getting the office ready. Ruth Honeywill comes in through the outer office and stands in the doorway. From the conversation that follows we learn that Falder is released. While Sweedle makes certain 'wise' comments on human nature, Cokeson comes in.

To the kind inquiries of Cokeson, Ruth gives an account of her life during the past two years. She could not stay with her husband and she left him taking her children along with her. She came across Falder the previous day. He is very much reduced; he cannot get anything to do. They found him a place when his time was up; but he was there only three weeks. His relations have no interest in him; and she herself is not in a position to help him. Her own relations in the country are angry with her marrying Honeywill, and there is no question of her going back to her husband. He treated her worse than ever and began knocking the children about. After she left her husband she tried to earn food by making shirts; but she could earn very little that way. She used to work till late at night. It was starvation for the children. "And what happened then", Cokeson asks. Ruth replies, "My employer happened then—he's happened ever since." Her employer treated her all right. But she has done away with that.

Ruth begs Cokeson to give Falder another chance. It is impossible for Cokeson not to be softened by Ruth's pleading voice and the pitiful face. He tells her that he will talk to the partner but he cannot



make any promise. He takes the address of the woman and advises her not to send Falder there unless he is sent for. Ruth leaves the place.

Cokeson calls in Sweedle and asks him to keep the young Richards hankering after the clerk's post. He next suggests to him to treat Falder, kindly if he happened to come there.

At this point Falder himself makes his appearance. He is thin, pale and somewhat older. His eyes have grown more restless. Sweedle withdraws. Falder timidly takes the hand of Cokeson held up to him. He glances towards the partners' door. Cokeson tells him that the partners have not yet come. Falder sits in a chair beside Cokeson.

Falder says he just wants a chance. He had paid for his offence more than a thousand times. They say that he weighed more when he came out than when he went in, but they could not weigh his head, or his heart. They got him a place. He thought that he was going to get on well. But one day the other clerks came to know about his past and he could not stick to the place. He had one small job after that but it did not last, the trouble being with his past references.

Falder continues. One of his sisters is in consumption. The other could not help him for the fear of her husband, who wanted to get rid of him with an offer of twenty-five pounds to go to Canada with. Falder declined the offer and came away. He has slept in the Park three nights that week. But meeting Ruth—he feels a different man now.

After Cokeson and Falder talk for some more time, the two partners enter. The formal greetings being over, Cokeson asks Falder to go into the clerks' room. Falder does as he is instructed. Cokeson turns to James and tells him that Falder is penitent and that they may give him another chance. James is firm in the beginning but Cokeson manages his feelings and softens him. James desires to know what the young man has been doing since he came out. Cokeson informs him that he has had one or two places, but he could keep none, being very sensitive.

James then enquires about the woman, Falder was mixed up with. Cokeson informs him that the young man has met her : she is not living with her husband ; and he does not know if Falder is living with her. He adds that the woman came to the office that morning. James does not like the young man having anything to do with this married woman. He tells Cokeson plainly that unless Falder makes a clean sheet of that affair, he cannot be admitted to their office.

Now Falder is asked to speak to James. James tells him that they want to give him another chance. Falder is advised to get rid of any notion he may cherish that he has been unjustly treated. James adds that no man can try to escape after playing fast and loose with morality. Falder replies that he had a lot of time to think over that matter in the prison. He says that he has come to the conclusion that



if the offenders had been treated differently that first time, and put under somebody who could look after them, and not in prison, not one-fourth of them would ever have got there.

But James advises Falder to lay aside all those thoughts and look to the future. What the young man has got to do is to put all the past behind him and build himself up a steady reputation. James adds that Falder must give his word to have done with his relationship with Ruth, for such a relationship stands in his way of building up his future. Falder can come back to their office only on the condition that he will have nothing to do with that woman.

Falder says he could not give up Ruth. She is the only one he has to look after and she is all he has got. James says that Ruth must be able to see it for herself. She would not want to drag Falder down further. If there were a prospect of his being able to marry her, it might be another thing. Falder says it is not his fault. If only she has money, she can easily get a divorce.

Walter is about to speak. But Cokeson breaks in stating that the matter is far-fetched, and need not be considered by them. Walter, however, tells Falder that he is inclined to help him, if it can be managed. Falder with James' permission beckons to Ruth in the street to come in. Cokeson, of course, tells the partners that Ruth has not been quite what she ought to have been, while Falder has been away.

Ruth comes in, James tells her that he has promised Falder to take him back if he will make a fresh start. Falder tells her that Walter is good enough to say that he will help them to get a divorce. But James opines that it is not practicable. He turns to Ruth and tells her that she should give up Falder if she does not want to stand in the way of his future. Falder remarks that nothing shall make him give her up. He repeats that there has been nothing between them. He promises James that they will keep apart till the affair of divorce is over. Disregarding Falder's words, James turns to Ruth to say that Falder's future is in her hands. Ruth at last says that she will do the best for him. Being able to guess the truth, Falder is non-plussed. He covers his face with his hands.

There is sound of footsteps. Cokeson advises Ruth to get into the clerks' room with a brisk movement. Falder also follows her and Cokeson shuts the door.

The Detective Sergeant Wister enters. He says he has come to get the whereabouts of the clerk whom he arrested there in that room some two and a half years ago. Cokeson tells him that they are not responsible for Falder's movement. Wister informs them that Falder has failed to report himself lately. They have just heard that there was a serious matter of obtaining employment with a forged reference, and they want Falder in that connection. Cokeson tells the detective that they are very busy just then, and they might be able to tell him if he could make it convenient to call again. James says if the detec-



tive wants Falder, he must find him without their help. As he speaks, Wister's looks fall on Falder's cap on the table. The detective warns them against sheltering criminals. James firmly replies that he is sheltering none.

Wister turns to go, stating that he does not want to disturb them any more. Instead of going towards the outer office he goes to the door of the clerks' room. He goes in and soon comes out with his arm twisted in Falder's. Walter asks the detective to let him go for that time, but the detective replies that he cannot take the responsibility. With a queer, desperate laugh Falder throws up his head and goes out through the outer office, half dragging Wister after him.

There are sounds of footsteps descending the stone stairs. Suddenly there is a dull thud, and an ejaculation in Wister's voice. Meanwhile Ruth faints ; she is given some sherry. The outer door is reopened—Wister and Sweedle are seen carrying some burden. All except Ruth gather round it. Wister informs them that Falder jumped out and broke his neck. Sweedle is sent for the doctor at once. Ruth, having regained consciousness, listens to the voices and steals towards them. She drops on her knees by the side of the body. The next moment she cries out that he is dead. Cokeson says, "No one'll touch him now. Never again. He's safe with gentle Jesus "

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## 2

### THE TITLE OF THE PLAY 'JUSTICE'

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#### **Suggestive and Ironical Title**

There are critics who agree that the title of the play "Justice" is quite suitable to the theme and subject-matter and its treatment. But there are others although very few, who say that the play should have been called "William Falder". At the first sight, the title of the play appears to be non-committal. It is evident from the play that the sympathies of Galsworthy are with William Falder and Ruth Honeywill. He is not so impartial in this play as he is in his other plays. Hence, the title is suggestive ; it is ironical. In the places where justice is expected, it is only injustice which the individual, especially the poor individual, gets.

#### **Realistic Title**

As Galsworthy belongs to the realistic school of drama, he is wedded to the actual. The titles of his plays are terse and concise, laconic and short. Most of them have one word titles, e.g., 'Justice', 'Loyalties', 'Strife', 'Silver-box', 'Joy', etc. They have no romantic overtures or imaginative flights, such as, 'As You Like It' or 'A Mid-Summer Night's Dream' or 'All's Well That Ends Well'. Nor are his plays named after his heroes ; Galsworthy wants to deal with the unheroic heroes. Hence, he does not name his tragedies after the names of his heroes unlike Shakespeare.

#### **Problem-oriented Title**

Galsworthy was writing problem plays. His titles directly relate to the themes, and thus hint at the major problems they are going to deal with. "Strife" deals with the strife between capital and labour ; "Loyalties" deals with different kinds of loyalties, and similarly "Justice" deals with the problem of justice. Galsworthy had seen the wretched condition of the prisons of his time. He was pained to see the miserable conditions of the jails and wanted to see that they were reformed. So he painted in this play the miseries and cruelties of jail-life, and hit at the penal system of England which required change.

Hence, in the play the problem is more important than the individual. That is why, the play is named after its main problem and not after its main character. The individual (Falder) has been subordinated to the main problem, the problem of justice. The play, if



captioned after Falder, would not have pin-pointed the gravity of the problem posed by the dramatist in the play. By titling the play as "Justice", Galsworthy has made the problem and theme a matter of general regard and consideration. Falder is only a means and justice is the end. Falder is only a tool in the hands of the dramatist to prove what he wishes to propagate or advocate.

In the play, "Falder is convicted of forgery. We are convicted of murder. We are murderers. The society of the murderers. Our laws are slaughter-houses where innocent and sometimes unintentional and unseasoned criminals are turned into brutes and eventually murderers." This is the message the dramatist wants to give. What a better title could he have chosen than the present one, that is, "Justice"?

### **Falder a Symbol of the Problem**

The play could not be captioned "Falder", because the playwright did not want to lionize or make Falder immortal, but wanted to criticize the prison life and the system of justice in the England of his days. The tragic hero and heroine of the play are common persons and are symbols of two problems confronting modern society. Falder is further a symbol of a person who is branded as a criminal and is crushed under the chariot wheels of 'justice'.

### **The Central Idea behind the Play**

The play by its very title hints at the central idea behind the play. Falder is a young man in his early twenties when men easily fall prey to looks of beautiful women. In order to help her escape from the clutches of a cruel and drunkard husband, he forges out a cheque, and cashes ninety pounds instead of nine. His forgery is detected before he leaves for another country as planned by him with the woman and her children. He is willing to return the money, but the masters of the firm in which he is working decide to prosecute him to uphold the honest principles of their firm.

He is now in the cage of law. He has been entrapped in the net-work of law, whence there is no escape possible. "Once the cheque was altered and presented, the work of four minutes—four mad minutes—the rest has been silence. But in those four minutes the boy (Falder) has slipped through a door, hardly opened, into that great cage which never again quite lets a man go—the cage of the law." The malignant process of law works upon him. All the arguments of Frome in his defence fail. No consideration is allowed to the circumstances in which he committed the felony. He is sentenced to three years' rigorous imprisonment. Frome says, men like the prisoner are destroyed daily under our law for want of that human insight which sees them as they are—patients, and not criminals.

An essential corollary of the legal punishment is imprisonment. The unfortunate men, called criminals, are kept in prisons. The prisons are a dismal place where the prisoners live a life of hell. The life in



the prison completely demoralizes them. Once a man gets into the prison, there is no way out of it. The author describes the prisoners as a band of "luckless crews" who dwell in "those dark, ill-starred ships called prisons". From that voyage hardly a person ever returns. This is the malady of the existing legal system. It is a great mantrap and a paradox. Imprisonment is said to be a process to check crime, but in reality it becomes a process to complete the cycle of crime. Frome says with reference to Falder : "If the prisoner be found guilty and treated as though he were a criminal type, he will, as all experience shows, in all probability become one." Therefore, Frome appeals to the court not to thrust him back into prison and brand him for ever."

The process of law is an unending process. It does not end even with the term of imprisonment undergone by a prisoner. The Law requires that even after his release, the convict must regularly report to the police about his whereabouts. Howsoever penitent a convict might be, he must regularly report at the police station. This system keeps him reminded that he has been a convict. Law does not give him a chance to forget his unlucky past and to begin a clean life after his release. This is perhaps the cruelest aspect of the legal system. It is to this part of law that Falder again falls a victim and dies. The police detective again comes to arrest him because he has failed to report his presence at the police station and has got a job after forging a reference. The fear of the second imprisonment so horrifies him that he kills himself by jumping down and breaking his neck.

This is the malady of law and the legal system. It is to this social evil that Galsworthy draws the attention of the English public and authorities in the play. Thus, the play really achieves its objective, and the title is just, suggestive and appropriate, and contains in it the main idea behind the play.



### 3

## 'JUSTICE' AS A PROBLEM PLAY OR 'JUSTICE' AS A SOCIAL TRAGEDY

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Galsworthy was primarily a dramatist and not a propagandist. He did not claim himself to be a reformer. He only presented the social institutions as he really found them without fear or prejudice, or partiality. He exposed the evils and shortcomings of the contemporary social institutions. His function was to throw light on social evils and not to offer any remedies or solutions for them. "It is not the artist's business to preach," he says, "his business is to portray, but portray truly he cannot if he is devoid of insight which comes from instinctive sympathy. The sincere artist is bound to be curious and perceptive, with an instinctive craving to identify himself with the experiences of others. Galsworthy, thus, portrays social conditions and institutions with penetrating insight, curiosity and sympathy. It is only casually or by inference that he offers remedies or solutions for the problems taken up by him.

All his tragedies may be described as sociological tragedies. Each of them presents some social problem. *The Silver Box* exposes the great evil that there is one law for the poor and another for the rich. *Strife* throws light on the great social and economic havoc caused by perpetual conflict between workers and the employers, and thus shows the loss caused by the strife between capital and labour. *The Fugitive* treats of woman's position in social life. The spirit of the crowd and idealism dominates. *The Mob*, *Loyalties* and similar other plays are studies in racial pride and social conventions and shortcomings. *Justice* likewise exposes the evils of the contemporary English system of law and judicial procedure. Once a person is caught in the trap of law, it is impossible for him to escape from it. The author calls it a huge cage. Justice is treated as a machine which when gives a push rolls on of itself and crushes the individual. Men, like Falder, are destroyed daily under the law for want of that human insight which sees them as they are, patients, and not criminals. One evil exposed in the play is that of solitary confinement. Another evil hinted at is the practice of reporting regularly at the police station by the criminal after his release from the jail. Once a person becomes a criminal, he is always a criminal. Society ill-treats the ex-convict, Galsworthy



suggests only one remedy--sympathetic and humanitarian approach to the offender.

Galsworthy wrote about thirty problem plays. Each of these plays deals with a social problem. Likewise, *Justice* also deals with a social problem. The main problem is the problem of Justice. The subsidiary problems are those related to the prison system, solitary confinement, and ill-treatment of a woman by her husband. Condemning solitary confinement, and stone-roller of blind justice, Galsworthy asks what society is going to do for the relief of distressed women like Ruth and emotionally weak young men like Falder?

According to Allardyce Nicoll, "In *Justice* we feel the waste implied by Falder's suicide, and the same spirit is trenchantly expressed in *The Mob*, *The Pigeon*, *The Elder Son*, *The Fugitive*, and *Loyalties* all alike in producing this atmosphere and in making the faiths of man his masters. In *The Pigeon*, it is a question of the vagabonds and the poor. In *The Elder Son* it is the problem of morality as applied to the rich and the poor. *The Fugitive* treats of woman's position in social life. The spirit of the crowd and idealism dominate *The Mob*. *Loyalties* is a study in racial pride and social conventions."

*Justice*, says A. C. Ward, is a commentary upon the prison administration of that period. W. L. Phelps writes: "The play is a propaganda. The real criminal on trial is civilized society, its particular offence is the prison-system, and it is found guilty. Solitary confinement is a bad business, and like all deliberate cruelty is worse than inefficient. It is pleasant to know that as a result of the sensation produced in Great Britain by this play, certain much needed reforms were actually put through. Here Galsworthy stands by the side of Dickens, and all literary men who have used their art for a distinct moral purpose."

"The real problem of the play, what is society to do with a young clerk who falsifies his employers' cheque and steals their money in order to run away with another man's wife and children, alleged (but never shown) to be unhappy, is entirely shirked"—(George Sampson).

In Galsworthy's own words, "*Justice* made a great sensation especially in Parliamentary and official circles. Winston Churchill, the new Home Secretary, and Ruggles-Brisie, Head of the Prison Commission, both witnessed it, the first with sympathy, the second with a sinking sensation. Reinforcing previous efforts, the net result was that solitary confinement was reduced to three months for recidivists, and to one month only for intermediates and star-classes."

To sum up, *Justice*, like some ten other plays of Galsworthy deals emphatically with the problem of justice. Galsworthy says that law is an inhuman and malignant institution. It is a blind and lifeless mechanical force that tends to crush its victims into powder. Once an unfortunate person is caught in the trap of law, there is no escape possible for him. Galsworthy describes it as a huge dark cage "whice



never again quite lets a man go." Once a man is caught into its network, it continues to work upon him automatically. "Justice is a machine," he says, "that, when someone has once given it the starting push, rolls on of itself." Falder, a noble-hearted and promising young man is inadvertently caught in the network of law and is reduced to ashes. The author suggests that "men like the prisoner are destroyed daily under our law for want of that human insight which sees them as they are, patients, and not criminals."

Another great evil of the legal system is the notorious practice of confining the prisoner to solitary imprisonment. Solitary confinement is the worst punishment that can be inflicted upon a person. Cokeson says that he would not condemn even a dog to solitary imprisonment. It completely shatters the nerves of a person and demoralizes him. Frome says with reference to Falder: "Imprison him as a criminal and I affirm to you that he will be lost." This is true of every prisoner. If the prisoner be found guilty, and treated as though he were a criminal type, he will, as all experience shows in all probability, become one. The process of law confirms and completes the criminality."

There is yet another serious evil. A prisoner even after his release from the prison is required to report regularly at the police station about his whereabouts. Failure or even irregularity in the matter may lead to his arrest again. This is a process which does not let the prisoner forget his unfortunate past. This never allows him to start a new clean life. Once a criminal, he is always a criminal. Law which is meant to prevent crime compels man to commit more crimes. Falder typifies the voice of other victims: "I seem to be struggling against a thing that is all round me. I can't explain it; it is as if I was in a net: as fast as I cut it here, it grows up there." This is the malady of every unfortunate victim of law.

The solution to these social problems, as suggested by Galsworthy, lies in the sympathetic and humanitarian approach to the offender. We should hate the evil and not the evil-doer. We should judge a man not merely on the basis of legal acrobatics, but on the basis of his circumstances too. It is not merely the action, but the motive behind the action that should be the guiding principle of the judiciary. Furthermore, the criminals should be treated not as convicts but as patients in the beginning. Falder truly says: "If we had been treated differently the first time, and put under somebody that could look after us a bit; and not put in prison, not a quarter of us would have ever got there." The play was finally instrumental in bringing about revision in law relating to solitary confinement. Solitary confinement was reduced to three months for recidivists, and to one month for intermediates and star-classes.





## 4

## THE TRIAL SCENE

The trial scene in the play, *Justice*, is one of the most entertaining, significant and suggestive scenes. It is theatrically important, because it helps the action to develop towards its conclusion. It is dramatically important, because it is in it that the dramatist is able to present both the sides of the case. It is thematically important because it is in this scene that the playwright is able to touch in detail upon the problem of justice and says how blind it is, as it has no consideration for the compulsion of circumstances under the pressure of which a crime is committed by a young innocent creature like Falder.

The trial scene forms the Second Act of the play. Cleaver has already finished presenting the case for the prosecution. It is now Frome's turn to present the case for defence. The offence is admitted already and the evidence is conclusive. So the defence has only one course open, that is to say, what Cokeson called compelling circumstances. Frome makes an attempt to show that Falder was under a fit of temporary madness when he committed the crime, and that this madness was caused by his acute distress in the mind because of Ruth Honeywill's pitiable condition. Frome narrates the story of Falder's tragic infatuation for Ruth who was unhappily married to an ogre-like cruel husband.

The counsel for defence, Frome, presents his case with the evidence of Cokeson as his first witness. He examines Ruth and Falder also. Cokeson and Ruth do not say clearly that Falder was mad. They use different words to express his state of mind. Cokeson calls it 'funny' and 'jumpy', and Ruth calls his state of mind 'upset'. Thus, they spoil his case unintentionally.

Frome concludes his arguments stating that any man in this civilized society would do the same thing which Falder did, when he witnessed the cruelty to which an humble woman, Ruth, was constantly subjected. Falder's weak character is a misfortune. He should be treated as a patient and not as a criminal. Frome says, "I beg you not to return a verdict that may thrust him back into prison and brand him for ever...Imprison him as a criminal and I affirm to you that he will be lost."

The counsel for the Crown, Cleaver, proceeds to disprove the theory of the defence. He reduces Frome's plea of temporary insanity



to an absurdity. He says that the story of love has been manufactured for concealing the crime of the prisoner. He appeals to the Judge and the members of the Jury. He further says that the plea of insanity also does not apply because the prisoner was well in his senses ten minutes before the commission of the crime and ten minutes after it. He could not, therefore, be insane in between these two points of time. Therefore, he appeals to the court to return the verdict of guilty.

The Judge says, "Throughout the trial your counsel was in reality making an appeal for mercy." The grounds for his appeal to mercy in the speech of the defence counsel should have elicited some consideration as extenuating circumstances. But from the Judge they virtually received no consideration. The Judge in passing the sentences, clearly declared in his judgement that he could by no means think of dealing with the criminal mercifully : "I cannot feel it is in accordance with my duty to society to exercise the power I have in your favour." In short, he rejects the defence lawyer's appeal for mercy on the following grounds :

- (1) Forgery is a very serious crime.
- (2) Falder not only forged the cheque but also altered the counter-foil, and thus behaved in a manner that his guilt could have been passed on to some other man.
- (3) The appeal for mercy is virtually based on the ground that the accused was in great emotional excitement at the moment of the forgery, owing to his mad infatuation for a distressed woman.
- (4) That the criminal tried to run away with another man's wife and children.

Nevertheless, the Jury return a verdict of guilty and the Judge sentences Falder to penal servitude for three years. The trial scene, thus, is the most interesting and instructive scene in the play. It is the central and most momentous part of the action of the play. It is primarily in this scene that the dramatist expresses his views on the contemporary legal system and judicial procedure in England. This scene summarises the views of Galsworthy and throws light on one of the greatest social evils in England of his days. This scene further reveals that law is a blind and malignant force, legal system is a heartless and inhuman process and imprisonment is a demoralizing process that completes the cycle of crime leading to final catastrophe.

Revealing the shortcomings of the English legal system, the scene illustrates the words of Frome, "Justice is a machine that when someone has once given it the starting push, rolls on of itself." It is in the trial scene that Galsworthy presents certain problems which were the common problems facing the society of his day. There is first, the problem of a married woman who has been constantly ill-treated by



her cruel husband. Society does not find it convenient to help her. Justice is blind to her plight. If a young man attempts to rescue her from the tragic situation, he is branded as having immoral dealings with a married woman.

here is yet another problem touched upon by Galsworthy. He means to suggest that law should take into consideration not only the nature of a crime but also the circumstances and the mental state of the offender under which the crime is committed. In other words, he wants that men like Falder should be treated more as patients than as criminals. Also dealt with within this scene is the problem of parison system. But this is only hinted at, to be touched upon elaborately in the forthcoming scene.

The trial scene exhibits the high legal knowledge possessed by Galsworthy. The playwright presents both the sides of the case with utmost ingenuity. The trial scene is the very nerve centre of the play.





## 5

### 'JUSTICE' AS AN INDICTMENT OF ENGLISH LAW PENAL SYSTEM, AND PRISON SYSTEM

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*Justice* is a bitter indictment of English law as also of the penal system and prison system. It criticizes the existing prison system in England. It led to a reform in the prison system, and as a result of it the public opinion was roused against solitary confinement. Mr. Churchill and other high officers of the Home Ministry of England witnessed the play and brought out necessary changes in the prison system. Solitary confinement was reduced accordingly.

*Justice*, says W. C. Ward, is a commentary on prison administration. Solitary confinement wastes and worsens human beings. It has a very bad effect on the minds of the prisoners. Falder feels as if the iron has gone home into his soul. It is because of the bad effect of the prison that once a criminal, a man becomes for ever a criminal. In the prisons, the prisoner forgets what human nature is. The consequences that follow in the wake of Falder's coming out of prison are deeply significant. If he is already nerve-racked, despaired and broken by the inhumanity of prison life, the treatment he receives from society as an ex-convict makes him desperate. It is enough to drive even a sane and strong-willed man to desperation and suicide not to speak of a poor wretch like weak-minded Falder. What he says to Cokeson is a pathetic but very significant comment on the plight he has been reduced to. "The fact is I am struggling against a thing that's all round me. I can't explain ; it's as if I was in a net ; as fast as I put it here, it grows up there." The treatment he receives from his relatives, employers and acquaintances is also quite killing. His brother-in-law was so much ashamed of him that he did not even meet him. Nobody prefers a jail-bird in an office. Falder finds it very difficult to continue or to get a job.

Apart from the question of justice or injustice of sending Falder to prison for so long a time for his first offence under peculiar circumstances, the larger question that looms before our mind is : 'Why should Falder be made to suffer so much in consequence of his imprisonment after he has done his full term of punishment demanded by law ?' The problem here is not merely of dispensation of legal



justice but of much wider social justice of which legal justice is supposed to be a form. Why should Falder be chased as a thieving dog and hunted down with inexorable fury by the pious minded society, which thinks itself above the touch of any criminality? Why should an ex-convict be regarded as an outcast?

Galsworthy in this play wants to say that crime should be regarded not merely as a crime but as a disease also; and that there is a need of revising and reforming the penal codes and the systems of prison. The machinery of justice and prison should have a preventive and curative attitude. The prisoners should be regarded as people suffering from mental diseases or delinquency. *Justice*, therefore, criticizes the existing system of penal code and prison in England. The wheel of justice grinds the victim down. The law being what it is, the most enlightened Judge must administer it as it stands, however much he might feel that the so-called justice crushes down the life of the offender. In *Justice* we learn that the lawyer's clerk, Falder wrung with pity for the poor woman, Ruth Honeywill, is at his wit's end for money to release her from the clutches of her brutal husband. He forges the cheque in an ill-starred moment; a weak and rather emotional character, he was not himself when he did it. But that moment decides Falder's fate. And the wheel of justice, once started grinds the victim down—a victim not of injustice but of justice. What a strange justice it was!

The play deals with the effects of prison life on the offender. The stifling misery of solitary confinement has been beautifully pictured by the playwright. Falder, in his solitary cell, reveals more horror silently than words would have expressed.





# 6

## CHARACTER-SKETCHES

### (I) WILLIAM FALDER

#### The Unheroic Hero

Technically, Falder is the hero of the play. The tragedy of *Justice* is his tragedy. He is the pivot around whom the whole plot revolves. He is the centre of events; the centre of attraction, the centre of pity, and the centre of our sympathy. Yet he is an unheroic hero. Whereas the heroes of the Greek, the Shakespearean or the Heroic tragedy are grand, sublime in conception, Titanic and superhuman in vigour and force, gigantic and mammoth in dimensions, William Falder belongs to the common ranks of humanity. He does not stir in us deeper feelings as aroused either by a Macbeth or a King Lear or a Hamlet. Yet his state is pitiable and tragic enough to arouse pity and sympathy in our hearts.

#### His Background and Appearance

William Falder is a young man of twenty-three. He is a fatherless young fellow. His one sister is married; his another sister is invalid. He is a junior clerk in the firm of the solicitors, James and Walter How. When we first meet him, he gives us an appearance of "a pale, good-looking young man, with quick, rather scared eyes." He is a 'nice, pleasant-spoken young man.' In the words of Cokeson, "he's erotic—got no stamina." In the words of the Doctor of the prison, "He's nervous, rather melancholy." In the words of W. L. Phelps, "Falder, the victim, is a weak spineless young man, who is in love with a married woman, and has forged a cheque to pay their travelling expenses to a far country....."

#### Noble and Affectionate

Falder is a very affectionate, gentle-hearted and good-natured young man. He is sincere, steadfast and faithful in his love and devotion to Ruth Honeywill. He prizes her love as his most precious possession. It is for the sake of Ruth Honeywill that he suffers all miseries. On the whole he has no vice except that he loves a married woman who is ill-treated by her husband. It is not out of lust but out of a noble and pitiable condition that he loves her.



### His Love for Ruth

His love for Ruth Honeywill is undisputed. That his love is passionate, genuine and constant needs no proof. It is for her that he commits the crime. It is the sight of her that revives him after he completes his term of confinement. He is prepared to lose his job rather than lose her. "She is all that he has," as he says. His love for her makes him blind to everything. For her sake, he even tries to dodge legal and moral objections. For the sake of Ruth, Falder does not care for his career, well-being and future.

Even during his prison life, his only hope and consolation is Ruth Honeywill. When he comes out of the prison, he feels extremely nervous, lonely and helpless until he meets Ruth and finds her still sincere and affectionate. He says to Cokeson, "But meeting her—I feel a different man this morning. I've often thought the being fond of her is the best thing about me; it is sacred." When James asks him to give up Ruth he says, "I couldn't give her up. I couldn't! Oh, sir! I am all she has got to lock to. And I am sure she is all I have got." He frankly tells Ruth, "Nothing shall make me give you up."

### Desperate and Reckless

Falder's association with the lady reveals a few important characteristics of his nature. He is kind-hearted, pitiful, tender, ready to help the needy to the best of his powers and capacity. He develops a tendency towards recklessness and criminality. In the company of Ruth he loses the balance of his mind. Ruth for him is a case of life and death. His youth is susceptible to the amatory appeal of a married woman. Her beauty and sex appeal have made him blind to reason.

We find Falder almost a wreck in the last Act. Society abhors him for he is branded once for all as criminal. He feels as though something is closing upon him like a net. He finds it difficult to get a job after his release from prison. Society compels him to duplicate his crime. He stoops to the level of forgery again to get a job. He is arrested for the second time. But soon he ends his misery by killing himself. The fact that he commits suicide is an indication of his weakness of will.

### Emotionally Weak Character

Falder is a weak-willed character. The way in which he reacts to the prison life shows his weak will. He feels that "a day shut up in your cell thinking and brooding as I do; it's longer than a year outside; I cannot help it." During his solitary confinement in the prison cell, he, at times feels like beating his head against the prison wall. His suicide is also a proof of his weak will. He has an unstable mind. In the words of a critic, Phelps, "He is a weak, spineless man." James also says of him that "weak character's written all over him." He is weak and nervous all through. He is a man of impulse.



He does not have the courage to face the circumstances. His decision to run away with Ruth, to forge out a cheque, and his suicide are all impulsive acts. He gets a nervous breakdown in the prison. Defending Falder in the court of law, Frome rightly says, "He has not a strong face ; but neither has he a vicious face. He is just the sort of man who would easily become the prey of his emotions."

### Conscientious and Dutiful

Despite his weak will, impulsive and emotional temperament, Falder is very smart, dutiful and conscientious. He discharges his duties in the office faithfully and with responsibility. Alteration of the cheque is his first and the only irresponsible act or crime. Before this he never did any such thing. Even after alteration and encashment of the cheque his conscience begins to revolt. He immediately realizes the mistake he has committed. He becomes so nervous that he feels like throwing away the money and flinging himself before a running bus. He wishes that the deed could be undone. But it is already too late. However, he decides to inform his employers after reaching his destination and to return all the money gradually. But malignant society does not prize nobility of intentions. A man is judged by his tangible actions and not by the motive behind those actions, however noble his motives might be. He is arrested and branded as a criminal type.

### A Victim of Society

Falder is a tragic figure. He is a victim of the maligned force of society. He feels as if he has been caught in an endless web of hard circumstances from which he cannot break away. He tells Cokeson, "I seem to be struggling against a thing that is all round me. I can't explain it, it is as if I was in a net ; as fast as I cut it here, it grows up there." In the end he jumps into the jaws of death under the tortures of his spirit and mind.

In short, Falder is the victim of the force of penal system. He is more sinned against than sinning. The confined life in the prison cell has affected his mind and heart seriously. By temperament, brooding, nervous, sensitive, he feels miserable. His devotional affection, firmness in face of adversity, illumine a few dark corners and recesses in his soul. The edge of criminality is made blunt by the overpowering good qualities of his nature. He seems to fancy that everybody is down on him.

## (2) RUTH HONEYWILL

### A Victim of Society

Like Falder, Ruth Honeywill is also a victim of society. She is a prey to the cruel social order. She is the most important female character in the play. She plays a major role in bringing the tragedy to its close. She is a true tragic heroine. She does not die. She only suffers, but her sufferings are more painful than death. She has to bear the pain of the death of her lover. When the dead body of



Falder is brought and laid before her she gets frantic and hysteric with grief. She flings herself upon the dead body and amidst hysteric cries she asks the people around her not to arrest him again. She is terribly grief-stricken.

### **Evil Star of Falder**

In a sense she is responsible for Falder's tragedy. She is his evil star although she loves him a great deal. Her unfortunate marriage is the cause of her tragedy. She is married to a callous, cruel and heartless monster. He tortures her in all possible ways and even tries to strangle her to death. This is the beginning of her poignant tragedy. Her acquaintance with Falder develops into passionate love. And it is this passionate love which is the cause of the hero's fall and his tragedy. She suffers terribly at the hands of her husband. She herself says : "He grew more and more cruel in his behaviour. He used me worse than ever. He couldn't break my nerve, but I lost my health, and then he began knocking the children about. I couldn't stand that. I wouldn't go back now, if he were dying." Ruth suffered terribly on account of her unfortunate marriage. She tells Cokeson about her miserable condition, "It was the best I could get, but I never made more than ten shillings a week, buying my own cotton and working all day ; I hardly ever got to bed till past twelve. I kept at it for nine months. I was not made for it ; I would rather die."

### **Her Appearance and Life History**

Ruth Honeywill is a pretty and attractive girl. She is only twenty-six years of age. She is tall, with black hair and eyes, and an ivory white clear-cut face. She has a natural dignity of pose and gesture. We find her, generally, unpretentiously dressed. She has an amatory appeal.

### **Her Love for Falder**

Ruth Honeywill is a love-starved woman. She knows nothing about the forgery committed by Falder. She is fascinated by the dreamy offer of Falder to take her to South America. Her love for Falder is strong and unchanging. She is highly faithful and devoted to Falder. She prizes Falder's love for her as her most precious possession. She told the Judge in the court, "It is the only thing in my life now." During the hard days of Falder's imprisonment, she keeps looking forward to his release. She tells Cokeson that it was the hope of getting his love again that sustained her through her hard days. As soon as she finds that Falder is in trouble for want of a job after his release from the prison, she meets Cokeson and requests him to give another chance to him in his office.

The thought of separation from Falder is painful to her. It is like death. Yet she agrees to give him up provided Falder's future is safe. She has the nature of a true beloved.

### **A Clever and Charming Woman**

Ruth is a clever and charming woman. The moment she gives a "honeyed look", all are disarmed. She manages to have the rule-



ridden Cokeson yield to her request to meet Falder in the office. She knows the tender nature of the old man, and she takes full advantage of it. In the last Act, she presents herself before Cokeson to plead on behalf of Falder. She makes him agree to recommended Falder's case to his boss. Cokeson asks her not to send Falder to the office until he requires to have him there. But she is clever enough to realize that she should strike the iron while it is hot. She promptly sends Falder into his presence at once.

### Conclusion (Opinions of Critics)

Ruth Honeywill is a splendid example of Galsworthy's power of depicting the nobler side of woman's nature. "...Mabel Dancy is very differently situated from Mrs. Jones, Ruth Honeywill, and Clare Dedmond—yet all four of them stand out as splendid examples of Galsworthy's power of depicting the nobler side of woman's nature."—(Coates). Skemp calls her 'pathetically enduring.' In emotion and character and motive she is like Falder; she is, like Falder, the victim of the society too. She is straightforward, honest, considerate, sacrificing, gentle, and generous. She possesses an essential nobility of disposition and native dignity. She is very simple, guileless. She lacks the subtlety and complexity of an urban woman. She easily invites general sympathy and pity. She never abandons ethical propriety. Even during her love-affair, she has never enjoyed sex. She suffers silently. She has great fortitude.  
(N. B. Please also see Answer to Question No. 54).

### (3) COKESON

#### His Personality and Appearance

Robert Cokeson is the managing clerk at the Solicitors' office run by James and Walter How. "He is a man of sixty, wearing spectacles, rather short, with a bald head and an honest pug-dog face." His personality is quite dominating. His role in the play is very important, and comes next to that of the hero. Sometimes we are amused by his mispronunciation and misuse of words.

#### His Humanism

Humanism is the most important quality of his character. It appears as though Galsworthy has put most of himself in Cokeson. Cokeson has sympathy for the poor, a strong sense of justice, a timid impartiality, generosity and humanism. All these qualities were possessed by Galsworthy himself. Cokeson's innate humanity compels him to sympathize with Falder and Ruth. That is why he allows a lady, contrary to the practice and conventions of the office, to enter there on a private mission. When he perceives Falder and Ruth Honeywill embracing each other in the office, he feels outraged; but then understanding the essential human nature, connives at their breach of decorum.



It is the same milk of human kindness that prompts him to pay a visit to Falder in prison and request the authorities to be kind to him. He displays his fellow-feeling, kindness, and pity for Falder at all places in the play. His sympathy and compassion for Falder are finely illustrated in his charactersistic attitude reflected in the following dialogue :

*"Cokeson.* I keep dogs.

*The Chaplain.* Indeed.

*Cokeson.* Ye-es. And I say this. I wouldn't shut one of them up all by himself, week after week, not if he'd bit me all over."

### **A Law-abiding, Disciplined Man**

Cokeson is a law-abiding and disciplined man. He says about himself : "I'm a plain man—never set myself up against authority." He is a very formal and conventional man who, in spite of himself, can never go against authorities. That is why his defence of Falder is quite vague. He yields to James How's decision to hand over Falder to law. He tries to defend Falder in the law court but in a very vague manner. This shows Cokeson to be the traditional serving man who contents himself by submitting to the dictates of the authorities.

### **His Honesty**

Cokeson is reputed for honesty. Both James How and Walter How pay homage to him in this respect. James says : "Well, Cokeson ! There's something in character, isn't there ?" Honesty has been his guide. Duty has been his mistress. He has loved the life of simplicity and conscientiousness. He has a bald head. His face is expressionless. He has no ambition to fulfil, has no saga of life to follow. He is a simple man of simple and good and nature. Everybody knows Cokeson for his honesty. Everybody likes him as a hard-working man. Everybody loves him as a conscientious man.

### **A Complex and Round Character**

Whereas, other characters in the play are static and do not change, he alone changes. He is a somewhat round character. He is like a dome of many-coloured glasses reflecting the various lights and shades of the day in various ways. He is many in one. He is a man. He is a servant. He is the member of a particular social order. He is at different times. But, everywhere, we find him to be a fine man. He is noble-natured man. He has instinctive goodness and his goodness impresses everybody. He says : "I like people to be open and jolly together." Cokeson is full of life and vitality. He grows and changes along with the progress of the plot. He is a multilateral personality.

### **A Humorous Man**

Cokeson is a humorous man. He is the only man in the play who provides humour and fun in his humourless and funless play. He



is consciously self-important. His behaviour in the office, in the law-court, and in the prison provides us many occasions when one feels amused by his words and attitudes. The chief source of his humour is a misuse of words and their wrong pronunciations. He at times uses Latin phrases erroneously. He sometimes indulges in malapropism. For example, at one place, he refers to the 'neurotic' nature of Falder; but he uses the word 'eurotic' for 'neurotic'—a clear example of malapropism. To him prisons are 'nahsty' places. In defence of Falder, in reply to the Judge's question to him: "Are you suggesting that he was insane?" Cokeson replies: "Quite compos." It is a misuse of the Latin term. The correct term is, '*non compos mentis*', meaning 'not of sound mind'. Further, the Latin '*sine qua non*' becomes '*sign qua nonne*', and '*prima facie*' degenerates into '*prime facey*'. So much for his love of Latinism; and a sound Latinism indeed! His verbal innovations are a nice source of amusement; he uses 'jumpy', a strange invention of Cokeson's. He tells Falder, towards the close of the play that he would use his 'gumption' in order to procure for him a job. 'Gump-tion' is the despair of even the most liberal lexicon. Further, 'snubby' and 'forthly' fall in the same category.

But Cokeson has a considerable amount of vanity. His vanity of possessing some legal knowledge, his zeal for bringing in the importance of his position in a law office, his pointless garrulity about himself, his absurd craze for accuracy in all his statements, his attempt to speak in favour of Falder but making the case worse by his simplicity, and, last of all, his declaration that Falder at the time of the forgery was not insane—all these give us a glimpse into the real nature of the man. He pretends to be wiser than he actually is.

### His Considerate Nature

Cokeson's considerate nature reveals itself at many places in the play. He has offered to help Ruth Honeywill in her distress. He does not want Falder to be prosecuted for forgery. He feels sad for the plight of Falder, and agrees to plead with the solicitor to take him back into service. He is successful in his attempt. But the pleasure of having done a good turn is not to be his. Falder is arrested again and the young man commits suicide. There is real bitterness in his love, when he says that the young man 'is safe with gentle Jesus'!

### His High Sense of Morality

Cokeson is a gentleman with a high sense of morality. He has got a great regard for authority: "I don't want to go against your father, if he thinks it right to prosecute Falder," he says to the outraged Walter. Again to the Chaplain with whom he differs so much as regard the worth of solitary confinement, he says, "I am a plain man—never set myself against authority." That is a true self-analysis. He is a watchdog of office discipline. To him the office is a temple of duty. It should be kept clean,



When Falder kisses Ruth, he (Cokeson) admonishes him, there is a sanctity attached to his office. There is no wonder he is trusted and respected by one and all, including his employers. He objects to Ruth, a married woman, having a private meeting with an unmarried young man, for it is against his moral faith. Later when Walter How offers to arrange for obtaining a divorce for Ruth, so that Falder may be free to marry her, Cokeson objects to it, because he knows that Ruth is no longer the same woman. Cokeson also appears to be a regular student of the well-written moral treatises. We feel, he is more fit to be a kindly preacher than to be a curt managing clerk of a firm of solicitors.

### Conclusion

His exterior is very cold, hard and formal; but inside he is firm, moral and honest. He has the milk of human kindness in his breast; he is honest and hard-working, he is disciplined and obedient. He is sincere and gentle.

### (4) JAMES HOW

James How is a secondary character in the play. He belongs to the old orthodox and conventional set-up. He is an interesting contrast to his son, Walter How. James How is a senior partner of the firm of solicitors. He is a shortish man, with white side-whiskers. He has plentiful grey hair, shrewd eyes and 'gold pince-nez'. He is son, Walter, is another partner of the firm.

Cunningness and shrewdness shine from his eyes. He is a successful businessman, and his essential humanitarian qualities are observable in his nature. He looks every inch a materialist whose one aim is to preserve the interest of his concern. He is an honest, straightforward man directing others to be honest and true. The idea of dishonesty about his office hits him hard. He says to Cokeson, 'Honesty is the *sine qua non* for workers.'

James How hates dishonesty. He also hates immorality. He does not like that a woman and man should ever enter into suspicious relationship. James is predominantly Victorian in morality. He cannot employ a man with a stain on his character, and would do so on the sole condition of his abandoning the companionship of Ruth Honeywill—a woman whose character calls for a thorough examination. He does not allow Falder to work in his firm until and unless he cuts off all relationship with Ruth.

James How is a believer in Victorian morality. He is guided by set, conventional code of morality. He does not hate Falder so much as his moral aberrations. He is not prepared to give him even a single chance to reform himself. His notions about crime and punishment are rigid. His conventionalism, however, should not be mistaken for cruelty, even unkindness. When Falder states that it is impossible for him to give up Ruth, he at last yields and tells the young man that he should not make him know what they do with themselves. When the detective, Wister comes to arrest Falder again, he refuses



So James How is a materialist and strict businessman. He hates dishonesty and indiscipline. He believes in conventional morality, yet he is quite compassionate and kind.

Walter is a character only of secondary importance. He is a contrast to his father. He is a junior partner of the firm of solicitors, James and Walter How. He is a young man of thirty-five years of age. He is a refined man. He has good manners and sweet temper. He has a pleasant, almost apologetic voice. He is the son of James How.

Walter How is a kind and considerate person. He pleads for Falder. He asks his father to take the young man back into the office. While James feels that Falder's private life is very shady, he (Walter) says, "I don't quite know what we have to do with his private life." He has a sense of inherent goodness. Instead of hating Falder for committing forgery, he pities him for his poor fate. He is really a good-natured man.

*Walter :* I should like to give him a chance.

Walter: It must have been the temptation of a moment. He hadn't time.

×                      ×                      ×                      ×

*Walter* : For the shake of his future, though.

James : (Sarcastically) According to you, no one would ever prosecute.

Walter : (Nettled) I hate the idea of it.

×                      ×                      ×

*Walter :* Put yourself in his place, father.

*James* : You ask too much of me.

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*James* : You may depend on it, my boy, if a man is going to do this sort of thing, he'll do it, pressure or no pressure ; if he isn't nothing'll make him.

*Walter* : He'll never do it again.

Walter How has a strong sense of compassion and fellow-feeling that seems to dominate his entire personality. He has a satirical approach to justice. He believes that mercy is above justice. He knows fully well that the rolling wheels of justice will crush the poor individual. He tells his father that Falder should be treated on compassionate grounds. His sympathy for Falder is evident at every step throughout the play.





## THE MINOR CHARACTERS IN 'JUSTICE'

### 1. Wister

Wister is a detective. He belongs to Scotland Yard. He is a square, medium-sized man, clean-shaved. He is the typical policeman. Human feelings do not move him, he is just an official, having an official attitude towards life. We see him first in a service uniform of blue serge suit and strong boots. He comes to the office of James and Walter. He has received a telephonic call. James tells him that he charges Falder with felony. On his second visit when he is misled by James, he immediately conjectures that Falder is inside the office. When Falder is nabbed by him and tortured, Falder throws himself down from the top-floor and is killed. But this human tragedy does not move him. He says that Falder was made to think that he would be able to escape his clutches.

Wister's profession compels him to set aside all sentiments and partiality. He appears to us more like a tool which is part of a vast administrative machinery. He does his duty, and in so doing he is deterred by no humanitarian scruples.

### 2. Mr. Justice Floyd

Justice Floyd is seen in the trial scene (Act II). He is a man who has strong notions about law. He pays no heed to the plea of the stress of circumstance or the disordered mental state. He even advises the jury to return a verdict of guilty. He says : "The bearing of all this on the question of premeditation (and premeditation will imply sanity) is very obvious. Before you can come to a verdict guilty but insane, you must be well and thoroughly convinced that the condition of his mind was such as would have qualified him at the moment for a lunatic asylum."

He sits on the bench as though he were the sole and the only custodian not only of law but also of morality. He ignores the human side of the case. For him justice is not tempered with mercy. He is severity personified. In his charge to the Jury he emphasizes the points which specifically prove that Falder's crime was premeditated. His judgment is an example of uncouth platitudes. He censures the immoral implications of Falder's relations with Ruth. He is, therefore, unable to justify to his conscience a plea for mercy



which has a basis inimical to morality. Floyd typifies the worst side of English law-courts—the way in which law is allowed to override human considerations.

Law, according to him, is “what it is—a majestic edifice, sheltering all of us, each stone of which rests on another. I am concerned only with its administration.” The Judge acts by the law to send Falder to the prison to serve penal servitude for three years. His justice is what people like Falder receive.

### 3. Cowley

Cowley is the bank-clerk (a cashier). He verifies the forged cheque. He comes into How's office for a few minutes. He identifies Falder as the man who had cashed the cheque and is ready to give evidence if called upon to do so.

### 4. The Governor

The Governor of the Jail, Captain Danson, V. C. is a neat, grave-looking man, with a trim, fair moustache. He has the eyes of a theorist. He has grizzled hair, receding from the temples. We meet him first standing close to his writing table looking at a sort of a rough saw made out of a piece of metal. The hand in which he holds it is gloved, for two fingers are missing. This is in Act III, Scene I.

He is a kind-hearted man. He bears no ill-will against any prisoner. He does not bear any vindictive attitude towards the criminals. On the other hand, he is always ready to help them as much as possible and within his official limits. He is much moved by their condition. But above all he is a servant of law. His duty is unpleasant, but it has not made him thoroughly inhuman. At least the religious hypocrisy of the Chaplain does not take him in, and his ironic reflections are sometimes refreshing in a rather close atmosphere.

### 5. The Chaplain

The prison chaplain, The Rev. Hugh Miller, is a dark-haired artistic man. He is in a clerical cadre. He has a peculiar, tight-lipped face and cultured speech. He calls the prisoners, “Extraordinary perverted will-power—some of them. Nothing to be done till it's broken.” Of prison he says, “If it wasn't for drink and women, sir, this prison might be closed.” He thinks that solitary confinement is good for the criminals. He says that it is now the criminals who can be made converts to righteous life. He is rather proud of his experience. He tells Cokeson : “Surely you should allow those who have had a little more experience than yourself to know what is best for prisoners.”

*Hugh Miller* is a clergyman. He is full of pity without being pious. His religion is to flatter the big and browbeat the small. He places more value on religious show than on its real practice. He has no touch of human feeling. He is a pretender of religion.



## 6. The Doctor

The prison doctor is Edward Clements. He is a mediumsized, rather good-looking man, with a quick eye. The doctor is also an official man. About Falder's state in solitary confinement, he says: "It's not doing him any harm. He's lost no weight since he's been here.....His mind's all right so far. He's nervous, rather melancholy. I don't see signs of anything more. I'm watching him carefully." He is a doctor who knows the malady but cannot suggest the remedy.

## 7. Wooder

Wooder is the chief warden of the prison. He is a tall, thin, military-looking man of sixty. He has grey moustache and melancholy, monkey-like eyes. He stands very upright. He seems to be sympathetic towards prisoners and knows his poor devils. Of prisoners, he says, "They're just like dumb animals at time."

## 8. Three Convicts

The three convicts are Moaney, Clipton and O'Cleary. Moaney is an old hand. It is his fourth spell of penal servitude. He has made a sort of rough saw out of a piece of metal. He is a rawboned fellow, about fifty-six years old. He has outstanding bat's ears and fierce, staring steel-coloured eyes. He takes pride in coming to the jail time andagain. He knows that after his release he would come again to jail within a year or so.

Old Clipton is called the philosopher by the Governor. He is a small, thick, oldish man. He has an almost shaven head, and smouldering little dark eyes behind smoked spectacles.

O'Cleary is the Irishman. He is just like an animal in the prison. He is broad-faced, middle-aged. He has a wide, thin, flexible mouth and little holes under his high cheek-bones. The Governor tells him, "You're an old hand ; you ought to know better." O'Cleary replies, "Yes, I've been through it all." He further says, "I can't always be the same steady man...It's here I feel it—the want of a little noise."

## 9. Harold Cleaver

Harold Cleaver, an old advocate, is counsel for the Crown. He is an adept in his art. He exposes the realities stripped, as he says, of all the 'glamour of romance'. His cross-examination is keen and pointed. He delights in driving home his points. In his address to jury, he relies upon sly innuendoes,—in every way he tries to impress the jury that there have been all sorts of underhand, undesirable activities. He is an astute lawyer who knows how to tear into shreds the case built up by the defence.

## 10. Frome

Frome is the counsel for the defendant, that is Falder. His cross examination is intended to bring out circumstances which



might extenuate the crime in the eyes of a jury. He does indeed try to get round the law as, Cleaver says and mentions and emphasizes all favourable points. As the defence counsel he tries to save not only Falder but Ruth as well. He persuades the Judge to keep her name out of publicity.

Hector Frome is young, tall man, clean shaved, in a very white whig.

Among other minor but not very important characters in the play mention can be made of the office-boy of the solicitors. He is a pale youth of sixteen, with spiky hair. Two years later he has grown a sprouting moustache.



## 8

### JAMES HOW AND WALTER HOW (A COMPARISON AND CONTRAST)

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When we compare James How and Walter How, we find the father (James How) belonging to the conservative outlook and the son (Walter How) belonging to the modern, liberal outlook. Both form a firm of solicitors. Both are secondary characters. Both are honest and efficient in their professions. If James is orthodox, conventional and rigid; Walter is sympathetic, kind and considerate in the pursuance of justice. The former is a rule-ridden, morality-stricken man, the latter is full of the milk of human kindness. The son is much more good-natured and gentle than the father. They are really two types, two points of view of the dramatist.

James How is a shortish man, with white side-whiskers. He has plentiful grey hair. He is shrewd in appearance. Walter How is a young man of thirty-five. He is a refined-looking gentleman. He has a pleasant, almost apologetic voice. James belongs to the conventional type. He has certain age-old notions which he finds difficult to bypass—a rigid sense of morality. He does not like Falder's commission of crime. He also does not appreciate a young, unmarried man's relationship with a married woman having children and having a husband without a proper divorce from him. But Walter, in all these respects, is different. The father and the son are like two poles apart. Walter is unconventional and modern. He has a place for everything and everything has a place in his heart.

When James decides to prosecute Falder, Walter begins to plead on behalf of their junior clerk. Walter says that it is Falder's first chance and that he may be given another chance. But when Falder admits his offence, the only course of action in James's opinion is to prosecute him. To show mercy in such a matter is out of question with him; while Walter says, "the quality of mercy is not strained." What a difference; what a difference in attitude and approach!

James believes that in the greater interest of society, individual considerations must be ignored and offenders should always be prosecuted. In the case of Falder he says, "Nothing for it. Prosecute." But Walter pleads, "It's his first offence." He says that Falder should be given another chance. James says that he cannot



forgive the young man. When Walter says again that it must have been the temptation of a moment ; James only remarks that a man does not succumb like that in a moment, if he has a clean mind and habits.

Considering Falder's case James remarks : "If that's not a case for the law to take its course, I don't know what is." But Walter is concerned about Falder's future. James feels that it is out of question to keep the junior clerk in the office. He feels that it is equally out of question to send him (Falder) out amongst people who have no knowledge of his character. One must think of society, he says. But Walter is concerned about the individual. He thinks of Falder. He thinks, "But to brand him like this ?" While James thinks of society first, Walter thinks of the individual first. Have we not reason to believe that the individual should not be sacrificed for society ?

James thinks of society first ; Walter thinks of the individual first. James takes a serious view of crime ; Walter is all against prison. James feels that if society did not take care of itself nobody would. And he wants even Falder to realize it. His notions concerning crime and punishment are rigid. What are Walter's notions ? He hates the very idea of sending the poor young man to prison, which he knows, will do him irreparable harm. He even urges on his father to put himself in the position of the young man.

When Walter as well as Cokeson plead on behalf of Falder and ask James to give the young man another chance, James's remark is : "A gaol-bird in office ?" James also resents the relationship between Falder and Ruth Honeywill, a married woman. He feels that Falder's private life is very shady. There is, on the other hand, Walter who says that he does not quite know what they have to do with Falder's private life. It is Walter again who offers to help Falder to get a divorce for Ruth.

However, James is, not a cruel man. His conventionalism is not unkindness. When Falder states that he cannot give up Ruth, he at least yields and tells the young man that he should not make him know what they do with themselves. When he learns that Falder has broken his neck, he at once asks Sweedle in a 'voice unlike his o n' : "Run for a doctor ;.....An ambulance !" But, of course, Walter is all sympathy for Falder. He begins to pity the fate of the young man. There is a tone of heartfelt pity in his words ; "that finishes him. It'll go on for ever." So there is a soft core inside his hard surface.





## 9

## SELECTED LITERARY OPINIONS ON 'JUSTICE'

(1)

W. L. Phelps

"*Justice* has less equality in the scales than its title would seem to demand. In fact, we have here less balance and more bias. The restraint and austerity so characteristic of *The Silver Box* and of *Strife* are less in evidence. This play is a propaganda. The real criminal on trial is civilized society, its particular offence is the prison system, and it is found guilty. Solitary confinement is a bad business, and like all deliberate cruelty is worse than inefficient. It is pleasant to know that as a result of the sensation produced in great Britain by this play, certain much needed reforms were actually put through. Here Galsworthy stands by the side of Dickens, and all literary men who have used their art for a distinct moral purpose.

"But although the intention of the author is evident, the play being conceived in an ecstasy of rage against human oppression, the restraint of the artist controls most of the scenes. He does not give us a noble hero unjustly imprisoned ; he does not give us a hero at all. William Falder, the victim, is a weak, spineless young man who is in love with a married woman, and has forged a cheque to pay their travelling expenses to a far country ; curious, isn't how eagerly we respectable citizens wish he had succeeded in the endeavour ? Possibly, Browning would have said that his real crime consisted in the fact that he did not succeed in getting away, and that he allowed himself to be crushed by the terror and remorse brought on by solitary confinement. A true hero would have rejoiced in his crime since he did it, like Ibsen's Nora, for love ; would have told the Judge boldly that he could do nothing else ; and the weeks of solitary confinement would have been bright to him because he knew he was suffering for the woman of his heart. But also, Falder is no hero. Legally, he is fairly imprisoned, and on his release his broken spirit makes him more incompetent than ever ; so that when he is finally arrested again, he commits suicide, not because of any misfortune, but because of proverbial last straw. He could not stagger along one inch further under the accumulating burdens society put on his back. Falder was quite lacking in the heroism that supports failure, and in



the humour that supports failure. He really had no resources in his soul.

"There is only one villain in the play and he does not appear. He is the drunken ruffian, Ruth's husband, who beats both her and the children, and from whom under the English law she can find no way of escape. All the other people are a mixture of good and evil, and all seem to have good intentions. What they lack is precisely the lack that enrages Galsworthy, they lack human understanding, and the sympathy born of it. They cannot put themselves in the place of the suffering man and woman—if they could, oppression would cease and war be no more. From the point of view of orthodox political economy, Falder's suicide is a good thing, for his problem is thus eliminated. We need not worry about this care any further—only the woman and her children now remain on our hand. But from the point of view of Christianity, which is Galsworthy's view—whatever he calls himself—every human soul is precious in the sight of God and man. For the matter of a trifling sum of money of which he who lost it could afford to lose, two souls suffered shipwreck.

"What shall we say to those things? Shrug our shoulders in the good old *non possumus* (a form of refusal) gesture? Or ask ourselves if we are really offending against the least of these? Falder is convicted of forgery. We are convicted of murder?

"Notwithstanding the intrusive propaganda, *Justice* is a great play. As in *Strife* he takes us into the heart of the storm, so here we are not told about prisons, we visit the convicts. The way the terrific climax of the delirious door beating is reached, is one of the first illustrations of Galsworthy's art. We are shown into the general office, like any visitor; we hear the various views of the prison doctor, the prison Chaplain and sense. Gradually, we inhale the atmosphere; we feel a sense of imprisonment ourselves. Outdoors look good. Then come the interviews with the unfortunates, and the steady rise to climax.

The only artistic plot in this play is the last curtain speech. It is curious that this should ring so false, for, our dramatist is a master of the difficult art of conclusion. The persons are grouped around the dead body of Falder, and we long for the curtain to fall. Suddenly the old clerk says, "No one'll touch him now: Never again; He's safe with gentle Jesus!"

"This distracted everybody's attention from the tragedy, as completely and as discordantly as if someone on the stage had fired off a gun. The audience looked at each other in consternation, as though some hideously awkward thing had happened: as though some beautiful and brilliant comedy had ended with a particularly bad joke.



( 2 )

**John Galsworthy on the effect of his play "Justice"**

"*Justice* made a great sensation, especially in Parliamentary and official circles. Winston Churchill, the new Home Secretary, and Ruggles-Brise, Head of the Prison Commission both witnessed it, first with sympathy, the second with a sinking sensation. Reinforcing previous efforts, the net result was that solitary confinement was reduced to three months for recidivists, and to one month only for intermediates and star class."

( 3 )

**A. W. on the effect of "Justice"**

"It was instrumental in accomplishing revision of the law relating to solitary confinement in prisons; yet his crusade—in the press, by personal appeals to the Prime Minister, and in the rightly celebrated play *Justice*—could hardly have been less angry. During the writing of *Justice* he interviewed confirmees; but he got the views also of prison governors, and warders and these two were stated with complete disinterestedness. He helped to reinvest the literature of the theatre with something that had been forgotten during the melodramatic day of Victorian drama; the uncontrived 'slice of life' play which simply states a problem without making any attempt to offer a solution."

( 4 )

**A. C. Ward**

"*Justice* (1910) is a commentary upon the prison administration of that period. Falder, a young, unstable-minded solicitors' clerk, alters a cheque, with the idea of getting money to help Ruth Honeywill to escape from a brutal husband, and is sent to penal servitude. Cokeson, the managing clerk of the office where Falder was employed visits him in the prison a month before his term of solitary confinement expires. In a subsequent interview with the prison Chaplain, Cokeson says—

*Cokeson.* I can't help thinking that to shut him up thereby himself'll turn him silly. And nobody wants that I s'pose. I don't like to see a man cry.

*The Chaplain.* It's a very rare thing for them to give way like that.

*Cokeson.* (Looking at him in a tone of sudden dogged hostility) I keep dogs.

*The Chaplain.* Indeed?

*Cokeson.* Ye-es, And I say this; I wouldn't shut one of them up all by himself, month after month, not if he'd bit me all over... If you treat a man like this they'll do anything for you; but to shut 'em up alone, it only makes 'em savage.



The legitimacy of Cokeson's view is not in question, the point is that the effect of his remarks upon an average audience is the effect of an emotional bludgeoning, and such emotional reactions as naturally follow from this are a hindrance and not an aid to impartiality and the dealing of even-handed justice."

( 5 )

### George Sampson

*Justice* (1910) is a legal diagram used to harrow the feelings of the audience with the horrors of prison-life. But the feelings of the audience are harrowed by the torture scene in *La Tosca* and would be just as harrowed by a scene representing the failure of a beneficent major operation. Any dramatist can harrow the feelings of an audience. That improvements have been made in the condition of prison-life as a result of this play is comforting but irrelevant. The real problem of the play, what is society to do with a young clerk who falsifies his employers' cheque and steals their money in order to run away with another man's wife and children, alleged (but never shown) to be unhappy, is entirely shirked.

( 6 )

### Nicoll on the Tragic Atmosphere of the play

"We don't feel pity for the fate of Falder so much as we feel awe in contemplating the mighty mill-stones of justice, grinding exceedingly small, ruthless and faithful in their silent power. Tragic atmosphere dominates the play; tears are useless and vain. The heroes of Galsworthy's dramas are the unseen fates of modern existence, against which we, poor mortals, can but pitifully cry out in moments of desperation and horror."

( 7 )

### From a Magazine

"During Mr. Churchill's time at the Home Office, a notable contribution was made to the cause of penal reform by Mr. John Galsworthy. His sympathy with the under-dog and his sense of social injustice led him to have a deep feeling about the prison system. He was given special opportunities of visiting prisons; and he had consultations both with Mr. Churchill and the Prison Commission. He wrote a play called *Justice* which portrayed with lurid emphasis terrible effect of a separate confinement on a person of highly-strung temperament. In addition, he with his able pen wrote many letters in the press which directed public attention to the harm done by those elements of the prison system which were still at that time thought to be necessary for the purpose of deterrence.

"*The Magistrate*".

( 8 )

*Justice* is, in fact, the least impartial of his plays, and although he treats the British judicial system with scrupulous fairness, it is



quite plain that he is on the side of Falder. This by no means implies that he justifies crime as such, but simply that, having regard to all the circumstances of this particular case—an uncommon one—he wishes us to observe the results of the system we have created. Within the general scheme he draws the attention of the authorities to a particular evil, the evil of solitary confinement and its effect on a man of Falder's type.

In 1910, Galsworthy with his play *Justice* shook an unthinking public into awareness of the shortcomings of its own legal system and the inevitable repercussions of that system on society. He concerned himself, as always, not with offering a solution but with the simple statement of a problem—the problem of the effect of prison life on an unintentional criminal. Taking the situation of a weak-willed young man who, out of a motive as much compassionate as selfish, forges a cheque in order to get money to help his unhappily married lover find a new life, he pursues the case of Falder to its bitter end. Galsworthy deliberately calls this play a tragedy, and from this fact alone it becomes clear where his sympathies lie.” (A. W.)

( 9 )

#### Coates on 'Justice' and 'Escape'

“*Escape*, published in 1926, has some surface likeness to *Justice*, published in 1910. Both deal with convicts, who have been wrongfully imprisoned. But a comparison of the two plays brings out one very remarkable point of difference. The man who evades the demands of justice and escapes from prison before his time, is received by the world with open arms; the man who fulfils the demands of justice, and remains in prison till he has expiated his offence is cold-shouldered by the world and further punishments are heaped upon him. There is profound irony in all this; and one wonders whether that irony is deliberately imparted to the situation by Galsworthy himself, or whether it simply arises from the obvious facts of life and the frailty of unreasoning human nature.”

( 10 )

“Can we wholly blame any of the instruments of Falder's ruin in *Justice*? We hear nothing but evil of Ruth Honeywill's husband but that is because only the evil in him is needed, and he never appears in the play. I believe, that if he did, Galsworthy would find some conditioning explanation for him, as he does for 'his parallels, Johnes, and Jasper Bellow, and Hughes and Demons'. 'I refuse to consider Hughes a ruffian,' says Hilary Dallison. 'What do we know about him or any of them?' All the persons who actually appear mean excellently; not only Falder's sympathizers, like Cokeson and Walter How, but those who are agents in his punishment—James How, the prosecuting Counsel, the Judge, the Governor, and Chaplain, and Doctor and Warden in the jail—even the detective Wister. They are tied to a system, their defence and their condemnation alike be in the words of the Warden in the sketch *Order*—we



don't trouble about such things ; we are here to administer the system as we find it." —Skemp.

( 11 )

"*The Silver Box* and *Justice* are not good art ; and because they exaggerate, they are not good argument. When Galsworthy writes for the theatre, his humanitarian sentiment runs away with him. This play does not present typical, everyday cases ; therefore, they are faulty as illustrations of political or sociological arguments. They do not show under an extreme strain human nature at its highest ; therefore, they are faults as art. Jones and Falder are unhappy accidents ; they cannot thoroughly engage our sympathies."

—Edwards Shanks.

( 12 )

"In *Justice* character development is shown only in secondary personages, above all in James How and Cokeson; Falder remains at the end as he was at the beginning—weak, but with a nervous quality that drives him in despair to desperate action. His suicide gives a climax of incident, but the effect is weakened (at least when the play is read and not seen) by the reflection that here, as in his earlier desperate acts of forgery we have the result of an instant's blind impulse ; a tragic accident, not an inevitable tragic end."

( 13 )

"The Governor and the Warders of the prison in *Justice* are not inhuman brutes, the businessmen are not grasping materialists, callous and hard-hearted ; yet these men are the tools of destiny. The pitiful Falder is caught in the toils of a force which transcends all the characters in the drama ; they are not the direct cause of his fate ; his fate depends upon society. The place that the tyrant took in accident days is assumed by an invisible yet, omnipresent force of civilization."

—A Nicoll.

( 14 )

"If Galsworthy's indictment of human justice is severe, his indictment of the general harshness of the world, man's inhumanity to man, is still more bitter. When offenders against the social order are released from prison, and have presumably expiated to the full the crime they have committed by the punishment they have endured, are they welcomed back by the community on fair and reasonable terms, and given a chance to recover their good name ? Very seldom. The general attitude is well summed up by Falder, who says, "Nobody wishes you harm, but they down you all the same." On his release from prison, Falder did fortunately obtain a situation in an office but when the other clerk learnt that he was a gaol-bird, he was hounded out at once. All this constitutes a social punishment of the most severe kind wrongfully super-added to the legal penalty. Indeed, social ostracism may to some natures be more difficult to endure than imprisonment itself, and it is little wonder if such a reception drives the despairing culprit into crime again, so that his last state becomes a thousand times worse than his first." —Coates.



## 10

## A CRITICAL APPRECIATION OF 'JUSTICE'

## The Background and Source of the Play

*Justice* was first produced in 1910. Galsworthy was interested in several social problems to improve the conditions of workers, women, children, and prisoners. In those days, in England, solitary confinement was undergone by every convict who was sentenced to penal servitude for three years and more during the first three, six or nine months of his sentence. This solitary confinement was determined according to the class of the criminals. There were three classes—star, intermediate, and recidivist. Solitary confinement had to be undergone for one month by every prisoner. For female criminals it lasted for a period of four months. Galsworthy was interested in the abolition of this solitary confinement and wanted to see improvement in the conditions of the English jails. In September 1907, he visited Durham prison and the painful feelings he experienced during his visit were recorded by him in two sketches—*The House of Silence* and *Order*. In his play *Justice*, he embodied his reformatory zeal in respect of prison reformation. By the beginning of 1909, he was in correspondence with Henry Salt of the Humanitarian League and Mr. Ires, the authority on the subject, with an open letter to the Home Secretary already in mind. In a letter to Edward Garnett, he wrote : "I spent last Friday and Saturday in Lewes prison interviewing convicts undergoing solitary confinement—saw 49 in all and thoroughly confirmed my impressions that it is a barbarous thing." It is from his jail visits that he formed his theme of *Justice*. In May, 1909 he also wrote an open letter to the Home Secretary, the Right Hon. Herbert John Gladstone, explaining to him the bad effects of solitary confinement.

The letter written by Galsworthy to the Home Secretary spoke about the miseries of a young woman prisoner. I had the following description : "It is like nothing else in the world, it is impossible to describe it ; no words can paint its miseries, nothing that I can, would give any idea of the horrors of solitary confinement, it maddens one even to think of it. No one, who has not been through it, can conceive the awful anguish one endures when shut up in a living tomb, thrown back upon yourself...The overpowering sensation is one of suffocation. You feel you must and can smash the walls, burst open the doors, kill yourself."



There is little doubt that Galsworthy obtained much experience of the true state of mental sufferings of the prisoners doomed to solitary confinement; and while he was interviewing prisoners or exploring documents, the play *Justice* was taking shape in his mind; it was composed in 1907. The play achieved a high degree of stage-success. It led to a very important prison reform. Hence, Galsworthy can be placed in the same category of social reformers as Elizabeth Fry and John Howard.

*Justice* made a great sensation, especially in the Parliamentary and official circles. Winston Churchill, the new Home Secretary, Ruggles-Brisie, Head of the Prison Commission, both witnessed it, the first with sympathy, the second with a sinking sensation. Reinforcing previous efforts, the net result was that solitary confinement was reduced to three months for recidivists, and to one month only for intermediates and star-classes."

#### The Story of the Play

The play deals with the life of a young man of 23. His name is Willian Falder. He is a junior clerk in the office of James and Walter How, solicitors. He forges a cheque in order to help Ruth Honeywill, a beautiful but miserable young lady. This lady is ill-treated by her husband. She is in distress and in miserable condition. Falder wants to run away with that woman to another country. For paying the fare, he needs extra money. So he forges out the cheque, and writes 'ninety' in place of 'nine' pounds by adding 'ty' to the word & 'zero' to the figure of 9. He does this with a mind that he would return the money from abroad. But before his departure, this forgery is discovered. He is tried in a court of law. His lawyer tried to defend him by admitting the crime but by saying that the crime was done in a fit of excitement, emotional derailment, frenzy of passion, a mood of insanity. His defence is pleaded on humanitarian grounds of his age, the circumstances in which he did the act, and his intention to help a miserable lady. But his defence fails on the basis of matured and more legal arguments put forward by the counsel for prosecution. He is sentenced to three years' imprisonment, including the solitary confinement. The jail-life makes his life hell; all the time he is miserable and mentally disturbed in the jail. After his release from the jail, his relations, and other acquaintances do not treat him well. He is neglected, rebuffed, insulted and humiliated. He has to leave a job because his fellow-workers come to know that he is an ex-convict. He tries to get a job in the old firm of the Hows. But James How is reluctant to accept him. Later on, James agrees to give a job, but he should not let him know anything about his private life. He also asks him to abandon Ruth Honeywill. But Falder loves her deeply. He declines to give her up. Meanwhile the police detective comes there; he arrests him again on the charge of not reporting himself to the police station as a convict, and on the charge of forging a reference. Falder, who has had a bitter experience of imprisonment feels that he cannot undergo another term of imprisonment, so he jumps down and breaks his neck and dies.



### The Problem of the Play

The real problem of the play is what society is to do with a young clerk who falsifies his employers' cheque and steals their money in order to run away with another man's wife and children. Does society do justice to the people who commit crimes under an impulse of the moment and pressure of certain circumstances? Another problem related to this problem of justice is the problem of the effect of prison life on an unintentional criminal. The third minor problem treated in the play is that of a poor and helpless woman married to a cruel man who ill-treats her. The dramatist has posed a question: What is society to do with a woman like Ruth Honeywill who cannot be legally separated from her cruel husband? The evil of solitary confinement is also depicted in the play. In short, *Justice* is a study of the machinery of justice and of punishment in modern society.

### Impartiality and Sincerity in "Justice"

The dramatist is very earnest and sincere in the treatment of the problem. He wants to teach a moral. The moral is that man should be sympathetic to his fellow-men, that society should have an attitude of sympathy and understanding for the convicts, and that people should not be punished severely for their first offences committed under the momentary impulses or psychological pressure or force of circumstances. The dramatist is quite impartial in presenting both the sides of the case. He gives full opportunity for the counsel of defence to place his arguments. Similarly, he gives the same opportunity to the counsel for prosecution.

### Immaculate Knowledge of Legal Affairs

Galsworthy had a thorough knowledge of legal affairs. He himself had studied law and practised it for some time. The play demonstrates his legal knowledge in the trial scene which fully represents all aspects of the case. Witnesses are examined and cross-examined as in courts of law; the arrangement of the Judge and the Jury is perfect. In Mr. Cleaver we get the picture of a conventional but experienced lawyer. In Frome we come across the moderate type of lawyer of the younger generation who has a great deal of consideration for humanitarian aspects of a crime. Galsworthy sees the whole thing without any bias.

### The Flavour and Atmosphere of the Play

The play is a tragedy. The cause of the tragedy is the social evil in the form of its institutions and organizations. Hence, the play is a social tragedy. Here we are oppressed by a sense of inevitable social injustice. The atmosphere of the play is grim and tragic, but it is never full of horror and violence. The suicide of the hero is a natural consequence, and is used by the dramatist not to end the story but to have a better dramatic effect and heighten the tragic sense.



### The Play is not a Justification of Crime

Although Galsworthy has deep sympathy for Falder and Ruth Honeywill, yet the play is not a justification of crime. He simply wants to show the result of the process of law, but he hates all crimes. He wants to appeal to have consideration for a man's circumstances and intention when he commits the crime.

### The Theme of the Play

The theme of the play is that Law is blind and inhuman. It does not take into consideration human psychology and innate human infirmities. The British judicial system is unfair and unscrupulous. It is a malignant process in which innumerable innocent and noble-intentioned men are victimized. The prisons are like an ill-fated ship in which thousands of prisoners perish. Once a man is caught and convicted to imprisonment, there is no escape for him. This is the idea behind this social tragedy.


### Shortcomings of the Play

Though a popular play of its time, *Justice* is not a perfect play. In the first place the characters in the play fail to develop within the action of the play. The vast majority remain at the end as they were at the beginning. Hence, the impression conveyed is that of a dramatic situation, not of the evermoving current of life. Secondly, Galsworthy is inclined to build up his characters symmetrically, one balanced against the other, and this adds to one's sense of artificiality. The imaginative part of the work is too thin. A third defect is also pointed out by some. It is thus that at times Galsworthy's sympathy slips over the line into sentimentality. So, much sympathy for a criminal like Falder or for a woman who has been false to her husband and then to her lover, seems to these critics to be "sickly sentimentalism."

**Note :** *For other features of the play, please see inside the book different characters dealing with the textual problems, especially plot and characterization.*

### Conclusion

In *Justice*, Galsworthy exhibits dramatic skill by means of his good dialogues which help to provide the audience with all necessary information about the situation as well as with a proper understanding of the characters in the play.

In *Justice*, everything is held in suspense when the two advocates plead for and against Falder till Judge declares his judgment. In this play, a convict prowls about his prison-cell like a caged animal and then throws himself against the door like a lunatic. In it the dramatist depicts social deterioration and social injustice. Falder is about to be re-employed; he could have easily gone on smoothly with Ruth for the rest of his life; but then, one day he is re-arrested on the charge of false references which he has given for securing employment. Just before Falder is taken into custody by the detective, he jumps from the stone staircase and breaks his neck and dies. 





## SOME MEMORABLE QUOTATIONS FROM 'JUSTICE'

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### Act I

#### 1. *About the character of Cokeson*

"The managing clerk, Cokeson, is sitting at his table adding up figures in a pass-book, and murmuring their numbers to himself. He is a man of sixty, wearing spectacles ; rather short, with a bald head, and honest, pug-dog face. He is dressed in a well-worn black frock-coat and pepper-and-salt trousers."

#### 2. *About Sweedle*

"Sweedle, the office-boy...He is a pale youth of sixteen, with spiky hair."

#### 3. *About Ruth Honeywill*

"Ruth Honeywill...She is a tall woman twenty-six years old, unpretentiously dressed, with black hair and eyes, and an ivory-white, clear-cut face."

#### 4. *About Falder*

"Falder...He is a pale, good-looking young man, with quick, rather scared eyes."

#### 5. *On Ruth's Husband*

"He's on the drink again.....He tried to cut my throat last night."

6. "You're neglecting your work for private life." (*This is said by Cokeson to Falder.*)

#### 7. *A comment by Cokeson*

"I liked people to be open and jolly together."

#### 8. *Said by Cokeson of Falder*

"He's a nervous young feller."

#### 9. *"Life's one long temptation"*

#### 10. *This is how James feels about Falder*

"A man doesn't succumb like that in a moment, if he's a clean mind and habits. He's rotten ; got the eyes of a man who can't keep his hands off when there's money about."



11, "You may depend on it, my boy, if a man is going to do this sort of thing he'll do it, pressure or no pressure; if he isn't nothing'll make him." [This is a comment by James on Falder, when talking to his son Walter.]

## Act II

1. *The Counsel for the Defence, Hectore Frome's address to the court—*

"If it please your lordship and members of the jury, I am not going to dispute the fact that the prisoner altered this cheque, but I am going to put before you evidence as to the condition of his mind, and to submit that you would not be justified in finding that he was responsible for his actions at the time. I am going to show you, in fact that he did this in a moment of aberration, amounting to temporary insanity, caused by the violent distress under which he was labouring. Gentlemen, the prisoner is only twenty-three years old. I shall call before you a woman from whom you will learn the events that led up to this act. You will hear from her own lips the tragic circumstance of her life, the still more tragic infatuation with which she has inspired the prisoner. This woman, gentlemen, has been leading a miserable existence with a husband who habitually ill-uses her, from whom she actually goes in terror of her life. I am not, of course, saying that it's either right or desirable for a young man to fall in love with a married woman or that it's his business to rescue her from an ogre-like husband. I'm not saying anything of the sort. But we all know the power of the passion of love; and I would ask you to remember gentlemen, in listening to her evidence, that, married to drunken and violent husband, she has no power to get rid of him; for, as you know, another offence besides violence is necessary to enable a woman to obtain a divorce; and of this offence it does not appear that her husband is guilty."

2. *The Council for the defence, Frome, addressing the court*

"In these circumstances, what alternatives were left to her? She could either go on living with this drunkard, in terror of her life or she could apply to the court for a separation order. Well, gentlemen, my experience of such cases assures me that this would have given her very insufficient protection from the violence of such a man and even if effectual would very likely have reduced her either to the workhouse or the streets—for it's not easy, as she is now finding, for an unskilled woman without means of livelihood to support herself and her children without resorting either to the Poor Law or—to speak quite plainly—to the sale of her body."

3. *This is what Cokeson says about Falder in the court.*

"He was a nice, pleasant-spoken young man. I'd no fault to find with him—quite the contrary. It was a great surprise to me when he did a thing like that."



4. *A comment by Cokeson upon Falder in the court.*

"Have you ever seen a dog that's lost its master ? He was kind of everywhere at once with his eyes."

5. "I give you the word, and you want me to give you another."

6. "Like a fate hanging over him."

7. "We live in a highly civilized age, and the sight of brutal violence disturbs us in very strange way, even when we have no personal interest in the matter. But when we see it inflicted on a woman whom we love--what then ?"

8. *About Falder's character*

"He has not a strong face ; but neither has he vicious face. He is just the sort of man who would easily become the prey of his emotions.

9. *Frome pleading for Falder*

"I don't pretend, mind you, that his mental irresponsibility was more than a flash of darkness, in which all sense of proportion became lost ; but I do contend that, just as a man who destroys himself at such a moment may be, and often is, absolved from the stigma attaching to the crime of self-murder, so he may, and frequently does, commit other crimes while in this irresponsible condition, and that he may as justly be acquitted of criminal intent and treated as a patient."

10. "But is man to be lost because he is bred and born with a weak character ? Gentlemen, men like the prisoner are destroyed daily under our law for want of that human insight which sees them as they are, patients, and not criminals."

11. "If the prisoner be found guilty, and treated as though he were a criminal type, he will, as all experience shows, in all probability become one. I beg you not to return a verdict that may thrust him back into prison and brand him for ever."

12. "*Justice is a machine that, when someone has once given it the starting push, rolls on of itself.*"

13. "Is this young man to be ground to pieces under this machine for an act which at the worst was one of weakness ? Is he to become a member of the luckless crews that man those dark, ill-starred ships called prisons ? Is that to be his voyage—from which so few return ? Or, is he to have another chance, to be still looked on as one who has gone a little astray, but who will come back ?"

14. "I urge you, gentlemen, do not ruin this young man ! For, as a result of those four minutes, ruin, utter and irretrievable, stares him in the face. He can be saved now. Imprison him as a criminal, and I affirm to you that he will be lost. He has neither the face nor the manner of one who can survive that terrible ordeal. Weigh in the scales his criminality and the suffering he has under-



gone. The latter is ten times heavier already. He has lain in prison under this charge for more than two months. Is he likely ever to forget that ? Imagine the anguish of his mind during that time. He has had his punishment, gentlemen, you may depend. The rolling of the chariot-wheels of justice over this boy began when it was decided to prosecute him."

15. *The Judge briefing the Jury*

"Before you can come to a verdict 'guilty but insane,' you must be well and thoroughly convinced that the condition of his mind was such as would have qualified him at the moment for a lunatic asylum."

Act III

1. "If it wasn't for drink and woman, sir, this prison might be closed."

2. *A sad comment on solitary confinement*

"And I say this : I wouldn't shut one of them up all by himself, week after week, not if he'd bit me all over."

3. "Unfortunately, the criminal is not a dog ; he has sense of right and wrong."

4. "It's the same with dogs. If you treat'em with kindness they'll do anything for you ; but to shut 'em up alone, it only makes 'em savage."

5. "Our friend seems to think that prison is a hospital."

6. *[A glimpse of Falder's condition in his prison-cell].*

"Then, with a heavy sigh, he moves to his work, and stands looking at it, with his head down ; he does a stitch or two, having the air of a man so lost in sadness that each stitch is, as it were, coming to life. Then, turning abruptly, he begins pacing the cell, moving his head, like an animal pacing its cage .....leans his forehead against the iron...picking up the lid of one of the tins, peers into it, as if trying to make a companion of his own face.....Falder is seen gasping for breath. Falder shrinks back, not able to hear this sudden clamour. But the sound grows, as though some great tumbril were rolling towards the cell. And gradually it seems to hypnotize him.....He suddenly raises his clenched fists panting violently, he flings himself at his door and beats on it."

Act IV

1. "We mustn't be violent, must we ?"

2. "When a man's down never hit'im. 'Tisn't necessary. Give him a hand up. That's a metaphor I recommend to you in life. It's sound policy."

3. "I don't like doing anything out of the ordinary, it's not my habit. I'm a plain man, and I want everything smooth and straight."



4. "I'm afraid all the time now."

5. "It's no use calling yourself names that never did a man any good."

6. "You can't play fast and loose with morality and hope to go scot-free. If society didn't take care of itself, nobody would—the sooner you realize that the better."

7, "There were all sorts there. And what I mean, sir, is that if we'd been treated differently the first time and put under somebody that could look after us a bit, and not put in prison, not a quarter of us would ever have got there." (*This is what Falder says after his experience of prison life.*)

8. (*Cokeson at Falder's death*)

"No one'll touch him now ! Never again ! He's safe with gentle Jesus."





## 12

### ANNOTATIONS ON THE TEXT

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(Notes, comments, word-meanings, phrases explained and passages elucidated from the Text of the play "Justice.")

#### Act I

(The scene is partners' room)—here is Galsworthy's first stage direction which points out the time and place of action.

*James How*—he is the solicitor, a partner of the firm James and Walter How ; his son, Walter another partner of the firm.

*Well-worn*—Which has been very well used for long and has therefore become old and tattered.

*Close*—near.

*Clear*—here transparent.

*Pass-book*—a book containing the bank's record of a customer's account. About octavo size, with a pocket for cancelled cheques.

*Murmuring*—uttering somewhat indistinctly.

*Murmuring to himself*— words which are not meant to be heard by another and which cannot be heard by any one else.

*Bald*— hairless (head).

*Pug-dog face*—face with a small snub nose.

*Ticks*—marks.

*Spiky hair*—hard, thin, sharp-pointed hair.

*Grumpy*—ill-tempered ; surly.

*Party*—idiomatic expression, meaning a person.

*Send him to Morris's*—Cokeson tells Sweedle that he has sent Falder to Morris's.

*What name ?*—what is the name of the party (person) who wants to see Falder ?

*Honeywill*—this name does not show if the person is a male or a female.

*Unpretentiously dressed*—the poor woman dressed in a very simple way.



**Ivory-white**—the face of the poor woman was as white and soft as if made of ivory (tusk of an elephant).

**Clear-cut face**—the face bearing clear impressions.

**Natural dignity of pose and gesture**—the poor woman had simple dignity and charm in her looks and bearing.

**Matter-of-fact voice**—clear and straightforward manner of talking.

**Callers**—visitors.

**Honeyed look**—sweet look.

**Expanding**—eyes expanding in astonishment.

**Outraged interest**—in a state of insulted honour.

**Embarrassment**—confusion ; excitement.

**Quizzical**—puzzling.

**Fortified**—to have become strong.

**One of the partners**—James How or Walter How.

**Incoherent**—of which little sense could be made.

**Chuckling**—laughing softly.

**Shall I hold them in check ?**—shall I keep them quiet ?

**Is**—has come.

**Good-looking**—handsome.

**Irresolute**—undetermined ; knowing not what to do and what not to do.

**I'll give you a minute**—Cokeson will leave them (Ruth and Falder) alone in the room for a minute.

**It's not regular**—it is against rules and regulations, principles and discipline.

**He's on the drink again**—he (Ruth's husband) has again started drinking excessively ; her husband has again begun taking wine in excess.

**I went round to you**—first I went to your house.

**Digs**—lodgings.

**11.45**—in the night.

**Wincing**—starting.

**I'd sooner be killed than take you against your will**—this speaks of Ruth's character. She sincerely loved Falder. She did not want to impose herself upon him against his will. Therefore, she told Falder that she would prefer to die at the hands of her cruel husband than trouble him against his will.

**Queer smile**—smiling in a peculiar way.

**Passionately**—in an emotional fit.

**Fly apart**—went apart in different directions.

**Deliberately**—knowingly.



**Occur**—happen.

**Premises**—buildings.

**The party**—referring to the poor lady, Ruth.

**Distress**—trouble ; difficulty.

**Tract**—a small book or pamphlet.

**“Purity in the Home”**—it is the title of a small book on the subject of high moral character.

**Peculiar expression**—strange look.

**Cataloguing**—drawing the list of the articles given to him.

**Neglecting**—overlooking ; careless.

**Stares**—looks hard.

**My father here ?**—is my father, James, in the office ?

**Lease**—a legal document pertaining to a property.

**Counsel**—lawyer.

**Bothered**—troubled.

**Indescribable**—which cannot be described.

**compassion**—pity, sympathy.

**Deeds**—documents.

**Common ground**—public property.

**Depreciating**—looking small ; undervaluing them.

**Nodding**—shaking his head.

**Cons**—looks carefully.

**Covered**—spent.

**Gravely**—seriously.

**Puzzled and pained**—surprised and grieved.

**Consideration**—careful attention.

**Curl back**—hand back.

**Cab**—taxi.

**Contemptuous**—hateful.

**Felony**—crime more serious than misdemeanour.

**Anything of that sort**—this felony.

**Tearing hurry**—hot hurry ; very great hurry.

**Upset**—puzzled.

**Deliberate**—intentional.

**Swindling**—cheating.

**What was Davis's ship ?**—what was the name of the ship in which Davis sailed for Australia ?

**City of Rangoon**—the name of the ship.

**In this office**—should such a thing happen in this office.

**Scotland Yard**—the famous headquarters of the Detective police of England  
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**Disconsolately**—restlessly.

**There's something in the Character**—referring to Davis. James says that there is some peculiarity in the character of Davis.

**I don't quite take you**—I don't quite agree with you.

**Your story would sound d—d thin**—generally, people would not believe what you say.

**Gravity**—seriousness.

**A nasty business**—a very evil and clever trick played upon the firm.

**Unsettles**—disturbs.

**Shan't relish my lunch today**—Cokeson says that he will not be able to enjoy his lunch that day on account of this incident.

**Temptation**—weakness ; want of money.

**Convicted**—not yet established any charge upon him.

**Broods**—thinks.

**Popped up again**—appeared again.

**Roused**—awakened.

**Abstraction**—fit of stupor or semi-consciousness.

**Reely**—really.

**I can't have it**—I cannot allow it.

**Wait about**—wait outside.

**Directly**—shortly.

**Dragoon**—cavalryman of certain regiments.

**Sedentary**—sitting much ; done in a chair.

**Nahsty**—nasty ; ugly.

**Liver**—a living thing.

**Seemed in perfect order**—the cheque appeared to be rightly drawn without any suspicion of change or alteration.

**Open**—open-hearted.

**Jolly**—happy.

**Will**—will continue to.

**I take it**—I infer ; I guess ; I suppose.

**Upset**—confused ; alarmed.

**Nervous**—a man of excitable temper.

**Feller**—fellow.

**Startled**—surprised.

**It's a matter of form**—it is a matter of etiquette.

**Niceness**—good manners ; culture.

**Bursting into voice**—suddenly speaking out loudly.

**Do you keep dogs**—this question shows the excited state of mind of Mr. Cokeson. He is so excited and confused about the



incident of cheque that he cannot talk coherently with Mr. Cowley. He, therefore, puts to him a most irrelevant question whether he kept dogs.

**Bulldog pup**—the young of a bulldog.

**Like the eyes of a rabbit fastened on a snake**—Falder was as hypnotized by the looks of Mr. Cowley as a hare is hypnotized by the glaring look of a serpent.

**Interrogative look**—James looked at Mr. Cowley inquiringly.

**The cashier nods**—Cowley suggested, by a shake of the head, that it was Falder who cashed the cheque.

**Can't slip**—can't run away.

**Gloomily**—sorrowfully.

**Basement**—open floor.

**Stupefaction**—extreme astonishment,

**Morass**—marsh.

**I thought young Davis**—Cokeson thought that young Davis was responsible for the alteration of the cheque.

**Impassively**—gently and helplessly.

**Altered**—change the figure.

**Whether by you or Davis is the question**—James says that the figures in the cheque have been altered. What remains to be decided is whether they were altered by Davis or by you.

**Take your time**—think patiently and then reply.

**Regaining his impassivity**—recollecting his thoughts.

**Recollects**—remembers.

**Farewell luncheon**—farewell party given to Davis at the time of his departure.

**Puzzled**—confused.

**Accuse**—blame.

**Assistance**—help.

**Faint signs**—little hope and impression.

**Nought**—the figure of the zero.

**Counterfoil**—the corresponding part of the cheque.

**Lurch**—evading the topic.

**Gone all to pieces**—completely betrayed himself.

**Grimly**—sorrowfully.

**Deny**—refuse.

**I did it**—Falder admits that he altered the cheque, presented it and cashed it ; he also altered the counterfoil.

**I did it**—this is repeated by Falder to lay emphasis.

**Succumbing**—yielding ; giving way.

**Dear, dear !**—Oh God !



**What a thing to do**—What a thing to do!

**Badly**—urgently.

**Grasping**—catching.

**I can't think**—I cannot think how I committed this offence.

**Pluck**—courage.

**I will**—I will definitely pay the money back.

**Imploring**—entreating earnestly.

**In here**—in this office.

**Grave**—serious.

**Neat**—clear.

**Swindling**—cheating.

**Restraining**—checking.

**Jollier**—happier ; more pleasant.

**A real bad egg**—a man of no principles.

**I should like to give him a chance**—This sentence throws light on the character of Walter. He is very sympathetic and does not feel inclined to punish a poor man for a casual offence committed in a moment of weakness.

**Sneaky**—stealth.

**Counting on our suspecting young Davis**—depending on the belief that we will suspect Davis and that he will escape free.

**If the matter came to light**—if the matter was disclosed.

**Merest accident**—just a matter of chance.

**Stayed in your pocket**—the cheque book remained in the pocket of Walter just by chance.

**Temptation**—weak moment.

**Succumb**—yield ; submit himself.

**Clean mind and habits**—a man of upright character and honest dealings.

**He's rotten**—he has a weak and evil character.

**The eyes of a man**—the looks of a man ; impression on his face.

**Dryly**—gently.

**Brushing the remark aside**—putting off the remark of Walter that Falder had never been caught or even suspected before.

**Blind spot**—a weakness in character.

**It's penal servitude**—the punishment for this crime would be rigorous imprisonment.

**They are nasty places**—Cokeson means to say that prisons are a very hard and horrible place. This is the first remark about the prisons. The underlying idea of the play is to demonstrate the corrup-



ting and demoralizing effect of imprisonment on the intrinsically good unintentional sinners and criminals.

**Hesitating**—doubting.

**Spare**—excuse.

**Sine qua non**—indispensable condition.

**Brand**—punish.

**Dissolute**—immoral.

**Extenuating**—compelling force of circumstance.

**Cold-blooded**—indifferent ; carefree.

**Defraud**—cheat.

**Cast**—pass on.

**Law to take its course**—let law award its punishment to Falder.

**Sarcastically**—ironically ; satirically.

**Prosecute**—start legal proceedings against a person.

**Nettled**—seeing no way out.

**Fatuously**—foolishly.

**Confound**—perplex ; defeat.

**You feel**—you feel that Falder should not be prosecuted and should be given another chance.

**Askance**—sideways ; with a side look.

**Stop short**—give up.

**Scared**—frightened.

**Shrinking**—hesitating ; trembling.

**Grasp**—hold.

**Recoiling**—stepping back.

**Felony**—cheating.

**Motions**—makes a sign by the movement of the head.

**Rigid**—stiff ; strong.

**Grip**—hold.

**Pursues**—follows.

**Corridor**—verandah.

**Hoarsely**—in a dry and broken voice.

**Sweat**—perspiration.

**Mops**—washes away.

**Blankly**—vacantly.

## Act II

**Foggy**—full of fog.

**Crowded**—full of.

**Barrister**—advocate in the higher law courts.



- Solicitors**—lawyers.
- Reporters**—press reporters.
- Ushers**—door-keepers.
- Jury**—body of persons sworn to render verdict in a court of law.
- Warder**—jailer.
- Seemingly**—outwardly.
- Indifferent**—unconcerned.
- His**—Falder's.
- Clamour**—loud shouting ; outcry ; noise.
- Exactly**—just.
- Counsel**—barrister.
- Wig**—artificial hair for the head.
- Me lud**—my lord.
- Bowing**—showing respect.
- Dispute**—contest ; disown.
- The prisoner**—i. e., Falder.
- Insani y**—madness.
- Violent**—severe.
- Distress**—mental pain.
- A woman**—the reference is to Ruth Honeywill.
- Events**—happenings.
- This act**—the act of forgery.
- Infatuation**—deprivation of reason (due to love).
- Existence**—life.
- Ill uses**—gives harsh treatment to her ; treats her with cruelty.
- Terror of her life**—danger of life at the hands of her husband.
- Rescue**—save ; protect.
- Ogre-like husband**—her husband who was as cruel as a devil or monster.
- Point of the passion of love**—the point of deep emotional love ; the force of love.
- Violent**—ill-tempered ; cruel.
- Divorce**—legal separation between wife and husband.
- Relevant**—appropriate ; to the point.
- Alternatives**—other courses open to her.
- Separation order**—divorce.
- Insufficient protection**—law could not provide full protection to the helpless lady.
- Reduced her to the workhouse**—her plight must have compelled her to enter some beggar-home or orphanage.



**Or the street**—or, she might have been compelled to go begging in the streets.

**Means of livelihood**—sources of income.

**Desperate**—hopelessly bad ; reckless from despair.

**To take the law into their own hands**—to break the law ; to do some illegal action.

**Conceive**—plan.

**Reprehensible**—not good ; deserving censure ; unworthy.

**Defendant's**—Falter's.

**Irresponsibility**—because of his temporary insanity.

**Events to speak for themselves**—happenings will bear witness to fact.

**Summoned**—called.

**Under your eye**—under your supervision.

**Pleasant spoken**—who speaks well.

**Young man**—Falter.

**A thing like that**—*i.e.*, altered the cheque ; or committed the crime.

**Sign qua nonne**—sine qua non ; essential.

**Demeanour**—conduct ; bearing ; behaviour.

**Quite compos**—not of sound mind. (The legal Latin term is 'Non compos mentis')

**Precision**—exactness.

**Zoological Gardens** where animals are kept.

**Eccentric**—odd ; queer ; unusual.

**Prima facie**—on the face of it ; clear.

**Forgery**—cheating ; change a document in order to cheat.

**Establish**—prove ; show.

**Committed**—attempted ; did.

**Contribute**—add to ; help.

**Contention**—plea ; argument.

**Out**—not present in the office.

**Egg-zactly**—exactly.

**Leetle**—little.

**Irritated**—angered.

**Indulgent**—free ; frank.

**Precisely**—exactly.

**Sharply**—strongly ; loudly ; with force.

**Rapping**—thumping.

**Denoted**—suggested.



**Insanity**—madness.

**Gaping**—intending to speak.

**Dishevelled state**—untidy bearing ; awkward condition.

**Blandly**—coaxingly ; softly ; flatteringly.

**Stoically**—philosophically ; with great self-control.

**Ill-treat**—to treat badly ; to treat harshly.

**All sorts of ways**—in all different ways.

**Offered**—suggested.

**Prevented**—checked.

**Taken away**—arrested by the police and taken to the prison.

**Nearly strangled me**—almost stifled (suffocated) me to death.

**Just managed**—somehow escaped.

**Liquor**—wine.

**Half choking**—half suffocated, and therefore, unable to speak.

**Dreadfully**—fearfully ; extremely.

**Outfit**—clothes.

**To start**—to start for South America.

**Get me away**—take me away.

**Come into a windfall**—get the money from somewhere, as in a lottery.

**Taken away**—arrested.

**To have started**—to have started for South America.

**Dumb-like**—silent.

**Defendant**—Falder.

**His balance**—his balance of mind.

**Control**—check.

**His reason**—adversely affect his reason.

**I think it would**—I think it would seriously affect his reason even.

**Fairly**—reasonably.

**He's ruined himself for me**—Ruth sincerely and deeply loved Falder. When the counsel asked her whether she still loved him she only said that he had ruined himself for her sake, suggesting thereby that she could not help loving and remaining sincere to him.

**Stoically**—rigidly, without any marks of sentiments or passion.

**Considerate**—sympathetic.

**I would have done the same for him**—Ruth said that she loved Falder so much that she herself would have gone out of her way to help him as he did for her sake. Her love for Falder was sincere and deep.

**Bowed down**—yielded, or submitted to him.



**Always studied him to keep things nice**—always kept his wishes in view and acted accordingly without ever giving him any occasion for offence.

**Witness**—Ruth Honeywill.

**Brute**—animal.

**Couldn't seem to get her breath**—Ruth could not even breathe properly ; she had been so badly treated.

**There were the marks of his fingers round her throat**—this shows that her husband nearly strangled her.

**Out of my senses**—lost my mental balance.

**That he'd do it again**—Falder feared that Ruth's husband might try to strangle her to death again.

**Chump**—normal mental state.

**Flashed across me**—the idea of altering the figures in the cheque suddenly occurred to him.

**Put the 'ty'**—the cheque was drawn for nine pounds. The letters 'ty' could easily be added to the word 'nine' and thus made ninety.

**And the nought**—nought means zero. A zero could easily be added to the figure 9 and made 90. It was, therefore, easy to alter the cheque, both in words and figures.

**Chuck**—throw, fling.

**Out of breath**—breathless.

**Divested of**—deprived of ; without.

**Frantic**—mad.

**Deceive**—cheat.

**Queer**—strange.

**Sort**—type.

**To watch**—to look to.

**Inaudibly**—which cannot be heard.

**Haunted**—visited regularly.

**Found out**—discovered (in the act of forgery).

**Occur**—strike your mind.

**Confess**—admit.

**Employers**—James How and Walter How.

**Restore**—return back.

**Design**—plot.

**This woman**—Ruth Honeywill.

**For nothing**—for no useful purpose.

**Dreadful**—fearful.

**Chucked**—thrown.



**Suspicion**—doubt.

**Avow**—confess.

**Sullenly**—sorrowfully.

I meant to write.....the money—this shows the intention of Falder. He said that his intention was to write all about it to his employers from South America, where he intended to migrate with Ruth. He also meant to pay back the whole amount to the firm.

But in the meantime.....prosecuted—the judge said that if Falder had somehow managed to escape to South America before the discovery of the forgery, the suspicion might have gone to his fellow-clerk, Davis, and he might have been prosecuted and imprisoned for no fault of his.

**Light on**—fall.

**Disposes of your point**—finishes your point.

**Aberration**—disturbance ; mental excitement and disorder.

**Wit**—mind ; thought.

**Keen**—active ; alert.

**Persist**—insist upon ; hold.

**Elapsed**—passed.

**Recollect**—remember.

I seemed to come to myself—I seemed to become conscious of my act.

**Disposition**—attitude.

**Sneer**—smile scornfully.

**Vacuity**—Vacuum.

**Alluded to**—referred to.

**Palpitating**—pulsating.

**Brutal violence**—heartless cruelty.

**Inflicted**—imposed upon.

**Comfortable**—insensitive or careless ; passive.

**Bucolic**—rustic ; unrefined.

**Contemplate**—think ; pass over.

**Equanimity**—dispassionately.

**Gross violence**—heartless cruelty.

**Devotedly attached**—deeply in love with.

**Stronge face**—sufficient strength to resist temptation in a moment of weakness.

**Vicious face**—the facial impressions of a habitual criminal, the hardened features of a confirmed culprit.

**Become the prey of his emotions**—succumbed to his temptation ; yielded to sin under the irresistible force of love.



**Uncanny look**—strange looks of Falder as described by Mr. Cokeson.

**Strained to breaking point**—his nerves were so strained under emotional tension that he was on the point of nervous breakdown.

**Pretend**—claim.

**Mental responsibility**—mentally so disturbed that he could not be held responsible for any action committed in that state of agitation.

**A flash of darkness**—a passing fit of madness and mental irresponsibility.

**Human insight**—human understanding.

**A criminal type**—belonging to the criminal tribe.

**Verdict**—judgement.

**Brand**—mark.

**To be ground**—crushed.

**This machine**—machine of justice which is like a roller.

**A member of the luckless crew**—one of the criminals.

**Voyage**—journey.

**Irretrievable**—which cannot be restored or brought back, which cannot be rescued from ruin.

**Affirm**—assert.

**Ordeal**—trial.

**Heavier**—more weighty.

**The latter**—confinement in the prison of the under-trial (Falder) for more than two months.

**Bizarre**—fantastic.

**Can't make anything much of him**—the doctor says that he cannot quite understand Falder.

**Elicited**—extracted from.

**Avoiding the consequence**—for escaping the punishment for crime.

**Proposition**—problem.

**Not disposed**—not willing.

**To weary**—to give trouble.

**Peculiar**—strange.

**Disposed**—inclined.

**Value**—worth or weight.

**Innocent fellow clerk**—Davis.

**Testimony**—evidence.

**Bear**—keep.

**Demeanour**—behaviour.



- Admission—confession.  
 Handed to—given to.  
 Bearing—effect.  
 Premeditation—thought out beforehand.  
 Reporters—press reporters.  
 Disclose—mention.  
 Deliberately—on purpose ; purposely.  
 Perjury—false evidence ; false swearing.  
 Mitigation—making less severe.  
 Sentence—punishment.  
 Felony—serious crime.  
 Fair—just.  
 Forgery—cheating.  
 Indictment—accusation.  
 Grave—serious.  
 Offence—crime.  
 Subsequently—afterwards.  
 An innocent man— Davis.  
 Deter—frighten.  
 Consistently—in conformity with.  
 With leniency—leniently.  
 Determining—deciding.  
 Aggravation—making worse ; magnifying.  
 Conversant—familiar.  
 Gauge—measure.  
 Palliate—relieve without curing ; excuse.  
 Patent—clear.  
 Design—plan or plot.  
 Inimical—in enmity with.  
 Vitiating—spoiled.  
 Ab initio—from the beginning.  
 Flights—imaginative flights.  
 Majestic—grand.  
 Edifice—structure.  
 Sheltering—protecting.  
 Concerned with—my duty is.  
 Administration—the execution of.  
 Penal servitude—imprisonment.  
 Acquiescence—obedience.



**Will not be mentioned**—will not appear in Press report. That is to say, the proceedings of the court shall not be mentioned in the press.

### Act III : Scene I

**File**—row ; line.

**Serpentine**—zig-zag.

**Grizzled hair**—grey haired.

**Receding**—going back.

**Melancholy**—sad.

**Queer**—strange.

**Fourth spell of penal**—fourth imprisonment.

**Lag**—(here) prisoner.

**Star class**—a new prisoner.

**Clerical undress**—casual, rather than formal clothes of a clergy-man but retaining the clerical collar.

**Specimen**—sample.

**Perverted**—turned to wrong use ; led astray.

**Attired**—dressed:

**He's**—Falder has.

**Chapel**—a small church.

**Separate confinement**—solitary confinement.

**Brooding**—contemplating.

**Trickling**—falling.

**Com-il-fo**—(*Fr. Comme il faut*), as it should be.

**Ye es**—yes.

**Nahsty**—nasty.

**Spiteful**—hateful.

**Feller**—fellow.

**Reduce**—grown weak.

**Workhouse**—free beggar-home for the poor and the miserable.

**Spare you a little myself**—Mr. Cokeson offered to help him a little.

**Apart**—separately.

**Cry**—Cry with pain and misery.

**To give way**—to become sensitive and sentimental.

**Dogged**—persistent.

**Hostility**—enmity.

**Savage**—brute.

**Eurotic**—presumably neurotic.

**Stamina**—strength.



**Consumption**—tuberculosis.

**Separate**—solitary confinement.

**Q 3007**—this is the number of the convict Falder.

**Star class**—ordinary class.

**Nonplussed**-- puzzled.

**Suavely**—smoothly ; politely.

**Bewildered**—amazed.

**That's fully provided for**—rules and regulations of the prison have provision for it—that if any sign of injury to his health shows itself, his case will be reported at once.

**Mollified**—calm down ; beg pardon.

**Authority**—law.

**Rare**—exceptional.

**Treat**—pleasure.

### Act III : Scene II

**Ground corridor**—verandah on the ground floor.

**Stripe of deeper green**—a border of deep green on the walls.

**Filtering through**—passing through.

**Peep-hole**—a small hole through which one could see into the cell.

**Apron**—cloak.

**Dangling keys**—keys hanging in a hook.

**Emerging from**—coming out from.

**Gossiping**—talking.

**Athwart**—across.

**Athwart the cell**—lying across the small room.

**Raw-boned fellow**—a rough-looking fellow.

**Steel-coloured**—bluish shade.

**Sullenly**—sorrowfully.

**Cove**—fellow ; chap.

**Us**—*i. e.*, the hardened criminals.

**Banging**—beating.

**Wud aise**—would ease.

**Rebate meself**—repeat myself.

**Amiable**—who can be liked.

**Scrutinizing**—examining.

**Voluble**—with incessant or abundant speech.

**Morbid**—not wholesome ; sickly.

**Rests with**—depends on.



**Hold**—control.

**Contented**—satisfied.

**Holly**—an evergreen shrub.

**Can't make anything much of him**—the Doctor says that he could not quite understand him (Falder).

**Separate's doing him any good**—solitary confinement is not doing him any good, it is rather doing him harm.

**It's on his nerves**—it is telling upon his nerves.

**Tangible**—visible.

**Melancholia**—a sad state of mind.

**The poor devil**—i.e., Falder.

### Act III : Scene III

**Fast failing**—fast fading.

**Springs**—jumps up.

**Abruptly**—suddenly.

**Peers into**—looks through.

**Audible**—that which can be heard.

**Clamour**—noise.

**Tumbril**—tip-cart for rubbish ; ammunition cart.

**Inch by inch**—slowly and slowly.

**Swells**—expands.

**Clenched**—closed ; grasped.

**Panting**—gasping for breath.

**Flings**—throws.

### Act IV

**Sprouting**—springing up ; putting forth shoots.

**Gazing his fill**—looking intently at himself in the mirror to his entire satisfaction.

**Exultation**—triumph ; rejoicing.

**Impassivity**—calmness.

**Sardonically**—with a bitter or scornful smile.

**Time's been up**—Falder has completed his term of imprisonment.

**About that**—that Falder was prosecuted and convicted.

**The governor**—here, the boss, James How.

**He did**—yes, James How made a mistake by prosecuting Falder.

**Chanst**—chance.

**Honeyed smile**—sweet smile, characteristic of Ruth Honey will.



**Cartload**—as much load as will fill a cart.

**Plenitude**—completeness ; abundance ; entirety.

**Brisk with east wind**—Coketon comes in walking as quickly as the blowing of east wind.

**Eyeing**—seeing.

**Askance**—sideways.

**Ran across**—came across.

**Him**—Falder.

**Snubby**—unkind.

**Scanning**—examining ; scrutinizing.

**Unprosperous figure**—unhealthy person.

**His relations**—relatives of Falder.

**Forthy**—understanding ; frank.

**Till he finds his feet**—till he stands on his own feet.

**Waywise**—wise in the ways of the world.

**Dodging**—avoiding.

**Lava**—fluid matter thrown out by volcanoes.

**Smouldering**—burning slowly without flame.

**But I've done with that**—but I have severed all relations with that employer.

**Horrible**—dreadful.

**Derogative**—derogatory.

**Sanguine**—hopeful.

**Asperity**—roughness.

**Hardness**—coldness ; harshness.

**Hankering**—running after (the post) ; uncertain.

**Down**—down and out ; in difficulties ; weak.

**A hand up**—a pull up ; help.

**Metaphor**—aphorism.

**Sound**—healthy ; wise ; good.

**Governors**—bosses ; James How and Walter How.

**Vexed**—perplexed ; troubled ; irritated.

**Out of the ordinary**—out of the way.

**Your friend**—Ruth Honeywill.

**Paid for that job**—paid for my crime.

**First-rate**—very well.

**Got wind of it**—came to know about it ; came to know he was a previous convict.

**Dejectedly**—disappointedly.

**Flustered**—almost confused.



**Deserts**—punishment ; what is due as punishment.

**Crushing**—killing.

**Gumption**—capacity ; shrewdness.

**Disconcerted**—confused ; ruffled.

**Penitent**—affected by sense of guilt ; one that repents of his sin.

**Gaol-bird**—a convict who has been in prison for his offence.

**Fancy**—imagine.

**A leg up**—assistance.

**Grimly**—seriously.

**Reluctantly**—unwillingly.

**Shady**—dubious ; dishonourable.

**Awkward**—clumsy ; difficult ; embarrassed.

**Tentatively**—here attempting.

**Notion**—idea.

**Play fast and loose with morality**—break the principles of morality.

**To go scot-free**--to go unpunished.

**Gleam**—light or passing beam of light.

**Malice**—ill-will.

**That will pass away**—Walter sympathetically tells Falder that the painful memories of his imprisonment will soon be forgotten.

**Time's merciful**—Walter tells Falder that time is a great healing process.

**Twitching**—trembling, shaking.

**Keeping straight**—living a pure and honest life.

**Far-fetched**--far beyond the point.

**Beckon**—call.

**Fluster**—flurry ; modesty.

**Inclined**—willing.

**Beckons**—calls by the movement of the hand.

**Sharp nod**—to give a jerk to head, by the motion of the head.

**Instinctive apprehension**—natural sense of fear ; premonition of fear.

**Stoically**—without any sense of passion or fear.

**The burden of the situation**—the mental agony caused by the turn of events on the occasion.

**Accustomed groove**—his habitual seat which was a kind of retreat for him.

**To twist**—to rub.

**Prescient of disaster**—apprehensive of some great misfortune.

**Just above a whisper**—so softly that she could hardly be heard.



- Solemnly—on oath.  
Twitch and quiver—shake and tremble.  
Timidly—gently.  
Shrinks back—withdraws modestly in alarm.  
From the touch—from holding Ruth's hand.  
Brusque movement—quick steps.  
Scared voice—frightened cry.  
Huskily—dry in the throat.  
Plucky—courageous.  
Rescue—help.  
Interfere—disturb.  
Steal glances—look stealthily.  
Peaching—telling tales.  
Whereabout—address and other information.  
Fright—sudden fear.  
Aghast—struck ; stupefied with horror or terror.  
Swiftly—quickly.  
Flinging a look back--looking back desperately.  
Thud—the sound of falling of a heavy thing.  
Dashes forward—rushes forward.  
Distracted—greatly moved and agitated ; perplexed.  
Sherry—a kind of wine.  
Carrying some burden—they bring Falder's body.  
Ambulance—hospital car or any other vehicle for transferring the patients.  
She crouches over him—she falls over him and holds him in her arms.  
Cluster—gather ; form a group.  
Crouches—bends.  
A lost dog—a dog who has lost its master.





# 13

## MODEL EXPLANATIONS

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### ACT I

( 1 )

“A man doesn’t succumb like that in a moment, if he’s a clean mind and habits. He’s rotten ; got the eyes of a man who can’t keep his hands off when there’s money about.”

#### *Explanation*

These lines occur in the First Act of *Justice* written by John Galsworthy. These words are spoken by James How to his son Walter How, in reply to his pleading in favour of Falder on compassionate grounds. Walter How is of the opinion that the forgery committed by Falder was a matter of a few moments. It was like a flash in the mind and the culprit was compelled to do all that because of his particular circumstances. Disagreeing with Walter, James How says that it is as bad a case as there could be. If pressure of circumstances is enough to turn a man into a criminal, there would not be left any person free from crime. If a man has a clean mind and habits, no temptation is strong enough to deviate him from the righteous path. On the contrary, if he is foul-minded, and criminally inclined, he will readily yield to the pressure of circumstances and avail himself of the suitability of occasion to do the misdeed.

( 2 )

“You may depend on it, my boy, if a man is going to do this sort of thing he’ll do it, pressure or no pressure, if he isn’t, nothing’ll make him.”

#### *Explanation*

These words are spoken in the First Act of *Justice* (written by John Galsworthy) by James How. Falder has committed forgery. James How wants to sue him. His son Walter How pleads with him to forgive Falder, because it is his first crime. James How tells his son that he may depend on his idea, yet if a man starts following a criminal path, he goes on following the same whether there is pressure of circumstances or not. Most criminals, according to James How, are criminals by habit and not by accident. If a man is not in the



habit of committing crimes, nothing would happen to him whether he is under the pressure of circumstances or not, and he will not commit any crime.

## ACT II

(3)

"One wrong is no excuse for another, and those who are never likely to be faced by such a situation possibly have the right to hold up their hand—as to that I prefer to say nothing."

*Explanation*

The judge finding Frome's arguments in defence of his client Falder, to be somewhat longwinded, warned him against the prolixity of his pleading. Frome promises the Judge to touch the point in a minute. Frome says that Falder is innocent of the crime of forgery; he altered the cheque under the pressure of circumstances.

In response to Frome's argument, the Counsel for the Crown has spoken the above lines (the lines under explanation). Cleaver says that one wrong is no excuse for another wrong. Those who commit wrongs cannot hold their position in society high. Besides this, he wants to say nothing.

(4)

"This woman, gentlemen.....husband."

*Explanation*

Falder is arrested. He is facing trial. Frome is his counsel. He has just started his pleading. He is trying to prove that Falder did not commit the crime of his own accord. He did it in a fit of insanity and under the impulse of a woman's cause. Cleaver, the Counsel for the crown, has already stated his case. Frome argues that Falder's condition would be narrated by a woman (Ruth) whom he was calling. The woman had been leading a very miserable life. She developed contacts with Falder. Falder is a young man of twenty-three. Youth is the most plastic age of man. He wanted to save her. In this connection the question whether it was proper or not on the part of Falder to make love to a married woman, had no business to poke its nose. There was a sudden impulse and under the pressure of that impulse, he committed the crime.

(5)

"He was a nice.....like that."

*Explanation*

These lines are taken for explanation from the Second Act of *Justice*, a social tragedy written by John Galsworthy.



Falder is facing trial on the charge of forgery, felony and cheating. He has cheated his masters by changing a cheque of nine pounds to that of ninety pounds. In this connection many witnesses are being interrogated before the Jury. Many persons are to be cross-examined. Here Frome, the counsel for Falder asks Cokeson to shed some light on the character and conduct of Falder during the period of two years of Falder's service under the Hows. To this Cokeson replies in the following way :

Falder had always been a fine gentleman. He had regular habits, pleasant nature and nice behaviour. Never before had he given him or to the Hows a chance to complain against him. It was surprising that he should have behaved just contrary to his (Cokeson's) anticipation. Cokeson had never thought Falder to be so mean as to indulge in such a nefarious activity as he had done and due to which he had to face the ordeal of the court.

"Divested of.....forgery ?

#### *Explanation*

These lines have been taken from the Second Act of *Justice*, a social tragedy written by John Galsworthy.

Falder is facing trial on the charge of forgery, felony and cheating. Falder has cheated his master. The case is being presented to the Jury for disposal. Many witnesses are being examined. Here Cleaver, the counsel for the Crown, is cross-examining and interrogating Falder. Falder tries to say that he was out of his senses that morning, but Cleaver, a seasoned counsel ridicules the idea. According to him that romance of Falder caused the young man to commit the illegal and unlawful act. Cleaver says to the Jury.

That his friend (Frome), the counsel for Falder, was trying to play with the romantic aspect of the forgery. Falder was not mad or insane or senseless when he committed the forgery. He was in his senses. Only the romance of the woman was dancing in Falder's eye. His romance with Ruth compelled the former to do what he did. After all romance and law are not related. The law did not recognize romance. If the case is seen from the impartial point of view, without the colour of the romantic glamour of the situation and the causes thereunder, it will appear that the case is one of clear forgery. There is not the least doubt that it is a case of forgery.

( 7 )

"My friend.....of a crime."

#### *Explanation*

These lines are taken from the Second Act of *Justice*, a social tragedy by John Galsworthy. Falder stands charged with felony and forgery. He has cheated his masters by altering a cheque. The case is being heard in a court of law. Falder's counsel, Mr. Frome, continues his argument.



Frome says that his friend (Cleaver), who is the counsel for the Crown, had hinted at the romantic glamour of the case. Cleaver has tried to prove that it is not insanity or temporary aberration that has compelled Falder to commit the forgery. In fact, it was the romance of Falder with Ruth that compelled him to do all that. Frome's contention was that he was not going to explain, elaborate, scan or support the contention of Cleaver. He was speaking of the background of real, actual, practical and factual life. Falder wanted to help a woman in distress. It was but natural. So he thought of a way out. The only chance that opened itself before him was the cheque. He was tempted to have the money somehow or other. After all, he was a man and a young man. A wrong man could be tempted by a woman. When a man commits a crime and if he commits it as a raw or unintentional criminal, he is doing so in response to the natural and instinctive impulses of life. Life is like that. One does not know what will happen at a particular time under particular situations.

( 8 )

"Now, gentlemen .....what then ?

### *Explanation*

These lines occur in the Second Act of Galsworthy's play *Justice*. Falder stands charged with felony and forgery in the court. His counsel, Mr. Frome, gathering his notes, continues to argue by saying that Cleaver has altogether ignored the element of practical life that must be considered in every consideration of the behaviour of life. They lived in a highly civilized society and people could not tolerate brutal violence. This violence is anger-invoking and wrath-exciting even when it is inflicted upon a person who is not directly involved in the affair. In the age of developed liberality, democracy and enlightened humanism, it was but natural that the citizens of a society should feel pity when they see some inhuman and callous misdemeanour being meted out to anybody whosoever he or she is. This thing becomes more poignant when we see something inhuman being done to a woman who happens to be the beloved of somebody. The lover is easily excited to help her in an hour when she is being tortured at other ends. It is natural and spontaneous. We do it automatically.

( 9 )

"The rest has followed, as death follows a stab to the heart or water drops if you hold up a jug to empty it. Believe me gentlemen, there is nothing more tragic in life than the utter impossibility of changing what you have done."

### *Explanation*

Frome during the course of summing up the case in his address to the Jury does his best to convince the Jury that Falder forged the cheque under a momentary impulse of emotional and nervous excitement or madness. But the subsequent actions of Falder in failing to



confess this guilt to his employers, his alteration of the counterfoil, etc., cannot be explained away as all being done under the same impulsive madness. It would be absurd to say so. Therefore, Frome does not deny that Falder did all these deliberately. But he mitigates their criminal character by making them inevitable consequences of the first action, all due to the ingrained weakness of the criminal's character. He takes to similes as 'rhetorical devices' to carry his meaning to the Jury, a number of laymen. When a man is stabbed in the heart, it is inevitable that blood would flow out and cause the death of the man. The stabbing may be intentional or accidental. If a man holds up a water jug, the water will drop down and the jug will become empty. It is a common experience that one cannot undo a mischief by simply wishing that it had better been not done at all. Once the mischief is done, there is no retracing back. This impossibility of calling back an arrow that is shot is a matter of deep regret with many who would not like to see the ultimate mischief; such men are made miserable for the rest of their lives.

( 10 )

"But is a man to be lost because he is bred and born with a weak character? Gentlemen, men like the prisoner are destroyed daily under our law for want of that human insight which sees them as they are, patients and not criminals. If the prisoner be found guilty and treated as though he were a criminal type, he will, as all experience shows, in all probability become one."

#### *Explanation*

These words are addressed by Frome to the Jury and the Judge. He is arguing for the defence of Falder. He has already thrown light on Falder's character and the momentary impulse and excitement amounting to temporary insanity and the pressure of circumstances under which he committed the act of forgery. But the counsel for the Crown, Mr. Cleaver, pleads to the jury to reject Mr. Frome's arguments. They are all evidence of the weakness of his character.

Frome now contends that a man of weak character should not be abandoned as the despair of society. He should not be eternally condemned. If there be any chance of his reformation, he should be reformed by law and society. Many people who, like the prisoner, have been found guilty of committing an act unwarranted by social code of behaviour, have been utterly crushed owing to lack of understanding on the part of those who have the powers of Law. They think them to be criminals, whereas they are merely patients and not criminals. They need sympathy and understanding; they should not be subjected to the harshness of penal law. If such people are treated as criminals, in due course they may become real criminals. Society punishes them, tortures them to be criminals; and they, on their part, wreak vengeance on society through further criminal acts.



( 11 )

"Justice is a machine that, when someone has once given it the starting push, rolls on of itself. Is this young man to be ground to pieces under this machine for an act which at the worst was one of weakness."

*Explanation*

This extract is from Frome's speech addressed to the Judge and the members of the Jury in defence of his client Falder. He has already referred to Falder's weakness of character and given reasons why such cases need sympathetic treatment at the hands of society and not the cruel one aiming at the ruin of the person.

Towards the concluding part of his speech to the Jury and the Judge, Frome, naturally very doubtful of the success of the plea of temporary insanity, put forth in defence of Falder, tones down his argument into what is practically an appeal to the Jury for merciful, sympathetic consideration. It is the Jury that can save the unfortunate criminal by using their sympathetic imagination and human discretion. The course of justice is often relentless; the law makes out much provision for discrimination between criminals in strict accordance with each man's deservings. It is a collective body of rulings and directions which are operated mechanically. Life is an inert but powerful machine which requires only an initial start to roll recklessly on, the criminal code devised by the state requires somebody to bring a case against some other body who has offended the law. Then the prosecution, trial, and sentence take their course relentlessly and the accused is crushed and ruined for his guilt without any consideration for the springs—the defects in the social system or the individual weaknesses—which occasion the guilt. In the present case, if the Jury return the verdict of 'guilty', the poor youth Falder is going to be ruined only because he has been born and bred a weak character.

( 12 )

"Is he to become a member of the luckless crews that man those dark, ill-starred ships called prisons? Is that to be his voyage—from which so few return?"

*Explanation*

It is one of the most ironical passages in the play *Justice*, a social tragedy, written by Galsworthy. In summing up his defence, Falder's counsel, Mr. Frome, says that Falder is a weak character, who has slipped without any deliberation into a criminal offence. If without taking into consideration the weakness and the circumstances of the accused, the Jury return the verdict of 'guilty', Frome asks them to deliberate coolly the effect that their verdict would have on the criminal. It is a common fact that we see it daily happening in the world that once a person has been found guilty to serve a term of



imprisonment, he cannot be expected to lead a clean and virtuous life when he is released from his confinement. The long period of jail life tends to make him a confirmed and hardened criminal. Such a sad eventuality is not very different from the fate of the old galley prisoners who, once they were set on the voyage, had hardly any chance of returning home and lead their normal social life.

( 13 )

“The rolling of the chariot-wheels.....that for him.”

### *Explanation*

These lines are set for explanation from the Second Act of *Justice*, a social tragedy written by John Galsworthy.

Frome has concluded the evidence for defence. He is trying to elaborate the real meaning and purpose of justice. He feels that man commits a crime within seconds, but has to pay for the same all through his life. He compares justice with a cage out of which nobody comes out unhurt when one has fallen into it. It is also like a heavy stone roller, once given the push it goes on rolling for ever.

The contention of Frome is that the chariot wheels of justice have been crushing and trampling Falder for the last two months. He has received a lot of mental and physical torture. He is not going to forget it throughout his life. It is just like a permanent scar on his fair face. The scar has become indelible. So the chariot wheels of justice have already crushed and punished him and any more punishment or crushing by these wheels would result in a complete breakdown of his life. The culprit would be completely undone as a man. If he was imprisoned as a criminal he would be lost for ever. The first stage was the beginning of the torture. The second was his mental and physical torture as a result of the court ordeal and penal trial. The third one would be to put him behind the bars again. Frome is, thus, not prepared to see that in the interests of the prisoner and justice.

### ACT IV

( 14 )

“They come down on you like a cartload of bricks, flatten you out, and when you don't swell up again, they complain of it. I know'em—seen a lot of that sort of thing in my time.”

There lies a gap of two years between the action of Act III and Act IV. Sweedle is now eighteen and has learnt to speak in the plenitude of wisdom. Ruth comes to the office of Robert Cokeson, one morning. Sweedle who has just arranged the papers on Cokeson's table, is now surveying himself in the mirror. He puts some questions to Ruth about Falder. His considered opinion is that James How had made a serious mistake by proceeding against Falder legally;



The Judge also appeared to be quite ignorant of human nature. Ruth smiles on hearing these words.

Then Sweedle proceeds to give his own view of the ways of Law. What Frome called the 'Chariot-wheels' of justice, he prefers to describe as a 'cartload of bricks'. But the idea is nearly identical. Men like Falder are daily crushed and ground to pieces by Law. The machine of justice destroys such men, they are lost for ever. Sweedle too felt that Falder ought to have been given a chance to improve and reform his morals. He speaks like an old man whose worldly wisdom has attained maturity. He passes his judgment on the Governor (James How), on the Judge and the institution of Law.

(15)

"When a man's down never hit 'im. 'Tisn't necessary. Give him a hand up. That's a metaphor I recommend to you in life. It's sound policy."

#### *Explanation*

Cokeson advises Sweedle to treat Falder with due courtesy. He advises him to treat Falder as he would have treated him, if he were to be in a similar position. Sweedle replies that he naturally should do so.

Now, Cokeson puts in a good piece of human advice. His recommendation is not to ill-treat a man who is down and out. A person who is down should not be hit. A person in distress should not be maltreated. A sufferer should not be made a victim. He should be treated with sympathy, understanding and courtesy. This is how we should behave in life. It is a good policy. It is a humanitarian approach. It is human.

(16)

"I seem to be struggling against a thing that's all round me. I can't explain it ; it's as if I was in a net ; as fast as I cut it here, it grows up there."

#### *Explanation*

This speech is spoken by Falder. It occurs in Act IV.

Falder is released from the jail. After his release he gets a job and then another. One day, all of a sudden, the other clerks got wind of his being an ex-convict. Falder could not stick there. He had another job after that, but it also did not last.

Falder feels that he is in the worst mess. He finds all struggle useless. The thing is all round him. He cannot explain it. He feels he is in a net. The more he tries to cut it, the more it takes him in its grip. If he cuts it at one place, it grows up at another place. If he cuts it here, it grows up there. He finds himself helpless. He feels himself surrounded from all sides. However much he may try, he cannot get out of the net.



(17)

‘You can’t play fast and loose with morality and hope to go scot-free. If society didn’t take care of itself, nobody would—the sooner you realize that the better.’

### *Explanation*

These words are spoken by James How to Falder. Falder is released from jail. He reaches the office of his first employers. Walter How and Cokeson plead to James How for Falder. Cokeson says that Falder may be given another chance to serve in the office of James. In the beginning James is unwilling, then he gives in. But he wants Falder to have no concern with Ruth. Walter remarks that Falder’s whole future may depend on what they do. Falder is called in.

James flatly tells Falder that it is no good coming here as a victim. If Falder has any notion that he has been unjustly treated and punished, he should get rid of it. He cannot play fast and loose with morality. He cannot break the principles of morality. If he does so, he cannot go unpunished. If he is found guilty, he cannot go scot-free. Punishment is the natural consequence of every offence. Society has to take care of itself. Society has to protect itself. If society does not do so, nobody else would. Falder must bear this in his mind. The sooner he realizes the truth of this fact the better it is for him. Falder must always remain conscious of this fundamental principle.

(18)

“And what I mean, sir, is, that if we’d been treated differently the first time, and put under somebody that could look after us a bit, and not put in prison, not a quarter of us would ever have got there.”

### *Explanation*

These are the words of Falder to James How in the fourth and last Act of Galsworthy’s *Justice*.

James tells Falder that he cannot play fast and loose with morality and hope to go scot-free. If society did not take care of itself, nobody would. The sooner Falder realizes this the better. Falder replies that he had a lot of time to think it over in prison.

Falder has seen all types of prisoners in the jail. He feels that they need an entirely different treatment. Prisoners should be treated more kindly. They should be put under somebody who could look after them a bit. They should not be put in prison which produces an evil effect. Had this been done, not even one-fourth of the prisoners would ever have got there.





# 14

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

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- Q. 1. Point out some of the outstanding characteristics of Galsworthy as a dramatist.

Or

- Q. 2. Discuss Galsworthy as a tragic dramatist.

### 1. Modernity in his Plays

Galsworthy has chosen material for his dramas from everyday modern life. His persons range between the accidental thief (like Falder in *Justice* and Jones in *The Silver Box*) and the middle-class member (Mr. Barthwick in *The Silver Box*), the workman and the company directors (David Roberts and Edgar Anthony in *Strife*), the char-woman and the colonel's wife (Mrs. Hope in *Joy*). The plots, too, are but commonplace. A young man about town, in drunken malice, steals his mistress's reticule and purse and a labourer (Mr. Jones), out of work, driven by despair to hate society, steals in turn the purse and silver cigarette box (as in *The Silver Box*). The theft by the well-to-do man is hushed up, but Jones, the poor labourer, is sent to prison. *Strife* deals with the futile tragedy of a great strike, which ends in a compromise that breaks the extremists on either side. *Justice* shows a weak man (Falder) forced by circumstances to take one false step, namely, tampering with a cheque in the office. He is ruined by a criminal system which acts without discrimination. Falder is at last driven to suicide as the only way of escape from the clutch of circumstances. In all these plots, there is not a single incident which is foreign to modern English life. So it is said that Galsworthy is a modern dramatist wedded to the actual. He treats of commonplace objects; his characters are also common men and women in everyday situations. In the choice of his material and in conception Galsworthy is above all faithful to life as he sees it.

Galsworthy chooses his situations very carefully and having chosen them, he proceeds to balance it with two contrasting groups, one on either side.  
(Also see General Introduction)

- Q. 3. "Galsworthy is a Daniel come to judgement." Discuss.



Or

Q. 4. "In the plays of Galsworthy, Galsworthy is the judge and society is the criminal." Discuss.

Ans. Galsworthy is a peculiar mixture of intellectualism and sentimentalism. But in spite of the fact that Galsworthy is a great humanitarian and that he is prepared to sympathise with practically every object under the sun, he is able to maintain an impartial attitude towards the various issues which he happens to deal with.

He himself says that he must try to do away with all the prejudices in his mind. He observes : "Let me try to eliminate any bias and see the whole thing as should umpire—one of those pure beings in white coats, purged of all the prejudices, passions and predilections of mankind. Let me have no temperament for the time being. Only from an impersonal point of view, if there be such a thing, am I going to get even approximately at the truth."

Galsworthy can very clearly understand the pros and cons of every situation that he is dealing with. He presents his case more or less like a press reporter. Mr. Lamm goes to the extent of saying that the whole production of Galsworthy may be defined as a series of court reports. "Galsworthy was the son of a successful barrister and he himself was trained for, and had practised in, the legal profession. Mention has already been made in this book of the predilection of 19th century playwrights for presenting their conflicts in the form of law cases, a tendency, instance of which we find in Schiller and Kleist, the younger Dumas and Ibsen, to name only a few. No one however, excelled Galsworthy in this type of playwriting. His whole dramatic production might well be defined as a series of court reports. In almost all his plays there are interviews with the solicitors, details of legal procedure and court scenes and even when these are lacking, the drama almost invariably takes the form of a discussion of legal and moral justice. His method is to investigate one case and then to try to cast further light on it by impartial inquiry in other directions.

The chief characteristic of the plays of Galsworthy is his ironical perception of truth. In *Loyalties* for example, Galsworthy represents before us the case from a very impartial point of view. He is neither for one nor for the other. For him the main aim is to present the case as it is. In one of his essays he says that the main aim of the artist is to depict people and situations from a strictly realistic point of view. Galsworthy in his play *Strife*, for example, is able to maintain an absolute balance between the two parties contending with each other. He presents the two leading rivals in the play in a way which makes both of them look equally justified and convincing. The Chairman of the Board, John Anthony and the leader of the labourers are adamant, but Roberts knows the difficulty of Mr. Anthony. When old Mr. Anthony resigns we are told, "They have done us both down." This suggests that all has not been well even from the point of view



of a labourer. Though Galsworthy has sometimes been called a socialist, yet it would be a mistake to say so. He seems to be equally aware of the difficulties of the capitalistic class.

"One woman dead and the two best men both broken," says Harness mournfully to the company secretary. He replies, "Do you know, sir, these terms ; they are the very same we drew up together, you and I and put to both sides before the fight began. All this—and what for ?" And the hardned Harness answers, with a very grim "That's where the fun comes in."

In *The Skin Game* also it is difficult to decide which cause is better supported by Galsworthy. Galsworthy understands both Hill-christ and Hornblower. In the *Strife* he is able to represent the case both of Mr. Anthony and Roberts. Though he is not a socialist he puts the most remarkable speech in the mouth of a member of the labouring class. The fight of those that spend themselves with every blow they strike and every breath they draw, against a thing that fattens on them and grows by the law of merciful nature. That thing is capital. A thing that buys the sweat of men's brows and the tortures of their brains at its own price. Do not I know that ? Was it the work of my brains bought for seven hundred pounds and has not one hundred pounds been gained by that seven hundred without the stirring of a finger ? It is a thing that will take as much and give you as little as it can, that is, capital, thing that will say, I am very sorry for you, poor fellow—you have a cruel time of it.....A white-faced, stony-hearted monster. Ye have got it on its knees ; are ye to give up at the last minute to save your miserable bodies pain ?.....If we can shake that white-faced monster with the bloody lips that has sucked the life out of ourselves, our wives, and children, since the world began."

Galsworthy is able to present before us the point of view of Mr. Anthony with equal patience :

"The men have been treated justly, they have had fair wages, we have always been ready to listen to complaints. It has been said that times have changed ; if they have, I have not changed with them. Neither will I. It has been said that masters and men are equal. Can't there only be one master in a house ? Where two men meet, the better man will rule. It has been said that capital and labour have the same interest. Can't. Their interests are as wide as under the poles. It has been said that the Board is only a part of a machine. Can't. We are the machines ; its brain and sinews ; it is for us to lead and determine what is to be done, and to do it without fear or favour."

**Q. 5.** Compare and contrast Shaw and Galsworthy as dramatists.

**Ans.** Prose drama during the first three decades was most prominently represented by two great figures—G. B. Shaw and John



Galsworthy. Both belong to the Naturalistic school of drama and have written realistic plays. Both have written problem plays. Both have dealt with the burning social problems of their time in their dramas. Both are thus, the playwrights of ideas and owe allegiance to Ibsen. Yet Shaw and Galsworthy were men who were diametrically opposed to each other.

Shaw was a more vigorous and complex figure. He was incapable of confining himself within the narrow limits of realism. He looked before and after. His treatment of social problems is not purely realistic. He exaggerates, distorts and remoulds reality to suit his moral purpose. Galsworthy is a realist, pure and simple. He is content to hold a mirror to the life around him, to present men and manners with great fidelity and without distortion or idealization.

Galsworthy is objective, detached and dramatic and allows no intrusion of his own personality to colour the characters and events, but Shaw is more aggressive and self-conscious and freely projects himself into action and characters to colour and shape them in order to serve his purpose

Though both Shaw and Galsworthy, are dramatists of purpose and social critics, yet with a striking difference. In Shaw art is subordinated to purpose; he himself says, "for art's sake alone he would not write a single line." Shaw is more or less a propagandist. But Galsworthy is a pure artist and is content to dramatize the idea through a well-contrived plot so that his message is only implicit in the story or is suggested by subtle hints. Shaw has been likened to a physician who does not only diagnose the disease in its various aspects, but also prescribes his own remedies vociferously, though with great persuasive art. But Galsworthy only states the nature of the disease and leaves the mildly suggested prescription to the good sense of the patient.

Shaw is an iconoclast ; he has little to do with convention. He has created a new kind of intellectual comedy in which the action is mental rather than physical, and his plays are sparked by wit and paradox. Galsworthy, on the other hand, sticks to the conventional structure of drama ; he is not as verbose or witty as Shaw. Shaw's characters express sentiments which they do not appear to possess while his own characters have sentiments and feelings which they cannot express. His dialogues are, therefore, absolutely dramatic and have little interest beyond the revelation of character and the furthering of action.

Shaw by nature is a comedian. Shaw's comedies are animated by a bracing breeze of optimism which opens the golden vista of a higher and happier goal. Galsworthy, on the contrary, is a more serious critic of life, with his eye fixed upon the victims of society. His major characters are social victims, and his main forte is tragedy rather than comedy.



Shaw's heroines are more brilliant and witty, and have larger roles than the women of Galsworthy. Shaw's appeal is wider and more immortal than that of Galsworthy. Shaw is a greater master of English and a better stylist than Galsworthy. The output of Shaw also is greater and larger than that of Galsworthy. Shaw's volume and bulk is definitely larger than that of Galsworthy.

Q. 6. "The importance of Mr. Galsworthy's work in modern drama does not lie in its artistic power, but in its moral implication and the ethical force of the author." Discuss.

Ans. This illuminating remark occurs in Mr. Harold William's book called *Modern English Writers*. He comments : "The importance of Mr. Galsworthy's work in modern drama does not lie in its artistic power, but in its moral implication and the ethical force of the author." That "the Moral is the key-note of all drama" is the chief article of his faith ; and by this he means neither a moral that is a dramatization of a code approved by nine-tenths of the audience, nor the code by which the author himself lives, but a moral without any immediate practical purpose, left to the deduction of the individual from a faithful and undistorted presentation of things as they are for their own sake. This was the ethical method of Shakespeare. This is Mr. Galsworthy's theory of drama and sometimes he comes but little short of his theory. In *The Silver Box* (1906), *Strife* (1907) and *Justice* (1910) conscious as we are that Mr. Galsworthy is a thinker with definite views of his own, these views are only apparent as they are shadowed forth by a presentation of life that is cold and impartial. *Justice* is kinder to the rich man than to his poorer brother, labour suffers more than wealth in the warfare of the modern industrial world, the kindly philanthropist is at once a laughing-stock and an example to the world, these and other morals may be read in Mr. Galsworthy's plays, but he makes no attempt to indoctrinate his audience by methods which all are quick to resent, unless the doctrine be also their own. There is no bias in the moral Mr. Galsworthy sets rolling, for he is faithful to the ethical character of the drama of modern life outspread before him. John Anthony, Chairman of the tin-plate works, and David Roberts, chief of the strikers, are both deserted and "done down" and nothing is won for either side. The morality of Mr. Galsworthy's drama is concerned not with immediate returns but with the ultimate: it requires, therefore, "a far view, together with patient industry for no immediately practical result."

"With Mr. Bernard Shaw, Mr. Galsworthy is, then the writer of plays with a moral, the author of tendency dramas. But unlike Mr. Shaw he makes no bid for popularity. Mr. Shaw must bask himself in the sunshine of applause or the atmosphere of execration. Mr. Galsworthy can pursue his own path. For the good of his public, Mr. Shaw has been more thoughtful ; for the good of his soul Mr. Galsworthy has chosen the more excellent way. The satirist, unless



he raised a laugh, has never yet cleared away from the heart of society the accretions of evil custom and easy acquiescence. John Bull's "Other Island" helps us to see folly, and it also makes us laugh. Mr. Galsworthy hardly makes us laugh, not only because he is wanting in humour, but because he is always a little strident and harsh. Unless he is writing with acerbity he becomes profitless and weak. The first inclination of Mr. Galsworthy's talent is towards satire. He adopted fiction by which to express himself because it was the mode of the day; in the 18th century, he would have written satirical poems in iambic couplets. When he passed from fiction to drama he felt more painfully the want of poetry in his methods. Cold, involved and psychological satire can have no place on the stage, for no actor can represent it, no audience fix its attention upon its abstractions. Mr. Galsworthy was driven, therefore, to converting satirical fiction into the impartial analysis of the drama with a purpose."

But it must be remembered that the plays of Galsworthy are moralistic only in an indirect way. He himself says, "In regard to my plays, it may perhaps be as well to bear in mind that I am not a reformer—only a painter of pictures, a maker of things—as sincerely as I know—imagined out of what I have seen and felt. The sociological character of my plays arises from the fact that I do not divorce creation from life; that, living and moving, feeling, and seeing amongst real life, I find myself moved now and then—not deliberately and consciously—to present to myself types and clarify it all out in the form of a picture." He continues, "A drama must be shaped so as to have a spire of meaning. Every grouping of life and character has its inherent moral and the business of the dramatist is so to pose the group as to bring that moral poignantly to the light of the day."

The plays of Galsworthy have great moral force and we are time and again made conscious of the principles which Galsworthy believes in. Here is an example that might remind us of Shakespeare :

"The fight of those that spend themselves with every blow they strike and every breath they draw, against a thing that fattens on them and grows by the law of merciful nature. The thing is capital. A thing that buys the sweat of men's brows and the tortures of their brains at its own price. Do not I know that? Was it the work of my brain bought for seven hundred pounds and has not one hundred thousand pounds been gained by them.....? It is a thing that will take as much and give you as little as it can, that is capital. A thing that will say, I am very sorry for you, poor fellow—you have a cruel time of it.....A white faced, stony-hearted monster, ye have got it on its knees; are ye to give up at the last minute to save your miserable bodies pain?...If we can shake that white-faced monster with the bloody lips that has sucked the life out of ourselves, our wives, and children, since the world began."



He has written *Justice* only as a Messiah of Justice, In this play he states ironically that the poor do not get justice. Justice is blind ; it does not see man's circumstances. This play is also full of morals.

Q. 7. Discuss the place of dramatic action in Galsworthy's plays.

Or

Q. 8. "The way Galsworthy introduces dramatic action into his plays is pregnant with thought and emotion." Explain.

Or

Q. 9. "Where Galsworthy's use of dramatic action is concerned, what his characters do, is always perfectly in keeping with what they are." Elucidate.

Or

Q. 10. Comment on the dumb-show in "Justice" in Scene iii of Act III.

Or

Q. 11. "The dumb-show in 'Justice' is more than the dramatic action itself." Elucidate.

Ans. The cardinal principle of the dramatic action in his plays has been summarized by Galsworthy himself in the following way : "True dramatic action is what the characters do, at once contrary, as it were, to expectation, and yet because they have already done other things. No dramatist should let his audience know what is coming ; but neither should he suffer his characters to act without making his audience feel that those actions are in harmony with temperament, and arise from previous known actions together with temperaments and previous known actions of the other characters in the play. The dramatist who hangs his characters to his plot, instead of hanging his plot to his characters is guilty of cardinal sin." Galsworthy is consistently faithful to this cardinal and guiding principle. What his characters do is always perfectly in keeping with what they are.

Galsworthy is good Aristotelian in the relative importance which he attaches to incident and to character. "Dramatic action," says the shrewdest of all theories of drama, "is not with a view to the representation of character; character comes in as subsidiary to the action." It is true that Galsworthy is content with a dramatic action which lacks the ordered dynamic quality demanded by Aristotle ; but even when the action does not move towards a definite climax, the emphasis still rests on incident.

The way Galsworthy introduces dramatic action into his plays is pregnant with thought and emotion. In *The Silver Box*, the action of John Barthwick while closing the window against the sobbing of



Mrs. Jones' little child helps to intensify the dramatic action. In *The Elder Son*, the playwright follows another method by which he intensifies the dramatic action.

The imitation of cuckoo's note by little Jan in *Strife*, the release of the lark in *A Bit of Love* are skilful devices to help the dramatic action in the plays. Another example of suggestive dramatic action can be found in *The Pigeon*.

There are other examples too. At times, in a moment of high tension, the feelings of an agitated character are suggested by some significant symbolic action. In *A Bit of Love*, we find Strangway tearing to pieces a bird-cage in a fit of sorrow on account of the departure of his wife. Then, in the crisis of *The Fugitive*, the pathetic appeal of Clare Dedmond to Malise is heightened by the wistful manner in which she holds out to him a bunch of violets, at which he only stares, shrugs his shoulders and then moves on.

In the same way, in *The Eldest Son*, Sir William Cheshire breaks to pieces a small china-cup, when he hears of his son's disgrace, while Stephen More also crushes to pieces a wine glass in a fit of passion. Many more examples of the type can be quoted from *The Forsyte Saga*, *Fraternity*, *The Silver Box*, and other plays.

There is a good deal of dumb-show in Galsworthy's plays. In particular it is evident in *Justice*, *The Show*, *The Forest*, *A Family Man* and *The Fugitive*. In *The Show*, Lady Morecombe approaches the vacant chair of her dead son, holds the fancied head of the boy with her hands, and kisses it. At the close of *The Forest*, we come to know that Adrion Bastable stretches himself, with a sigh of relief, his fingers spreading and graping unconsciously like the claws of a cat. In *A Family Man*, the return of Mrs. Buklder to her husband, and also in *The Fugitive*, the conduct of George Dedmond after the last words have been spoken in the first Act are nothing but examples of dumb-show.

Dumb-show in Galsworthy's play *Justice* is at its best. For all practical purposes, it is more than the dramatic action itself. The dumb-show consists of the whole of Scene iii of Act III of *Justice*. Falder, the convict, is in his prison cell. He is there like a caged animal. He prowls about. He has the air of a man lost in sadness. And again, he begins pacing the cell, moving his head, like an animal pacing its cage. Falder is seen gasping for breath. A sound from far away seems "to hypnotize him." He begins creeping nearer to the door. Suddenly, he raises his clenched fists "Panting violently, he flings himself at his door, and beats on it." The curtain falls!

The scene ends. There are no conversations. There is no action. There are no characters here—except Falder. Not a word has been spoken! Not a syllable uttered! All is a dumb-show. Still it is more than the dramatic action itself. Here lies the signal beauty of Galsworthy's art.



Examples of tense dramatic moments when the inner feelings of characters are suggested only symbolically are not few in *Justice*. After his release when Falder is in the office of James and Walter How, the detective-sergeant Wister reappears and says to James about Falder, 'I thought perhaps I might get his whereabouts'—after which there is an awkward silence, which suggests to the audience that nobody in the office is prepared to tell the detective that Falder is there while Falder is actually there.

**Q. 12.** Galsworthy has no heroes and no villains. Amplify and illustrate.

**Ans.** The statement: "Galsworthy has no heroes and no villains" means several things. It means that his plays have no extraordinary men and women and heroes and heroines or villains in the traditional sense of the drama. It also means that Galsworthy is not so much interested in portraying characters as in depicting social problems. Thirdly, it means that Galsworthy's characterization is simple; he does not portray men of eminence, but only common men.

The study of Galsworthy's social plays clearly reveals the absence of heroes found in classical or romantic tragedies. In the old tragedies, say of Marlowe and Shakespeare, the heroes were drawn from the ranks of higher life, and were endowed with heroic qualities of valour, heroism, ambition and kingly glory. Eminent persons from the higher strata of life were the heroes of classical, Elizabethan and Restoration (heroic) tragedies. Agamemnon, King Lear, Hamlet, Othello, Macbeth, Anthony, Aurangzeb were heroes in the real sense of the term. But in the case of Galsworthy, we do not come across heroes of this type. Nor do we come across villains like Iago (in *Othello*) or Bosola, or Eunuch (in *All for Love*).

Galsworthy's heroes are not special or heroic or extraordinary. They are drawn from the common stock of ordinary humanity and are subject to the frailties and foibles to which all of us are subject. The heroes of Galsworthy are not men of superhuman strength like the heroes of the heroic tragedies of Dryden and Otway, nor are they fired with inordinate ambition like Macbeth. They do not have the introspective and psychological mould of Hamlet, nor do they have the incredible credulity of Othello. There is nothing of the intensely heroic in the heroes of Galsworthy like Jones, Falder and Roberts.

The heroes and villains would be misfits in Galsworthy's tragedies. In the classical tragedy the hero comes into conflict with fate. "A man of eminent rank and dignity generally a king, violates a divine law such as that forbidding patricide." He may commit the serious offence out of ignorance or chance. The gods become angry with him. He is punished for his inglorious deeds. But in Galsworthian tragedy we have only simple and ordinary individuals who come into conflict with the existing social order.



Similarly, in the romantic kind of tragedy of Marlowe and Shakespeare, the characters are either extremely good or extremely bad. Romantic tragedies have heroes as well as villains. It is on account of the acts of the villain also that the hero in such tragedies suffers. But Galsworthy is not interested in this type of tragedy either. He writes social tragedy which is the dramatization of the misery in social relationships. The place of external fate is taken up by society or the other forces like law or democracy. The struggle is not between a human being or superior or supernatural agency, or between one man and the other man, but between man and society. The conflict in Galsworthian tragedy is further endangered because of human folly, greed or selfishness.

Galsworthy's plays are problem plays. They are social tragedies based upon the sorrows and sufferings brought about to common men and women by the maladjustment of society and the evil social forces like the system of legal justice. In such tragedies a hero of the type of Marlowean or Shakespearean, or heroic, or Greek tragedy would have been out of place. Had Galsworthy created powerful heroes who would have fought against social justice heroically, the total purpose of his tragedy would have been defeated; the force and pity of his tragedies would have been lost.

That is why in Galsworthy's tragedies there are no heroes or villains. The characters typify various sub classes and trends in the modern society. Moreover, the modern age is the age of the common man. Kings, statesmen and eminent persons are rather despised. So it is the common man in his social relationship who is the subject of Galsworthy's social tragedies. He has knowingly created heroes who are weak, supine, nerveless, without greatness. In *Loyalties*, Dancy is an ordinary person; he has been a Captain in the army; he commits a theft, and is punished for the same. Another man, De Levis, is equally dishonest. He has committed numerous exploitations and indirect thefts, yet has never been punished. In *Justice*, the hero is an ordinary clerk; he is Falder; he forges out figures and words on a cheque. Jones in *The Silver Box* is a poor man; he steals the silver box dropped by Barthwick and is prosecuted and sent to jail. Falder, too, commits suicide in *Justice*. These tragic heroes of Galsworthy evoke pity and sympathy, rather than awe and admiration. They do not struggle and as such they fail to win our applause. They are pathetic rather than heroic figures. They are victims of a social system.

Coats has rightly said in this connection, "The power of the law or the mob or capitalist society so overwhelms the individual, whether innocent or guilty, that he is rendered impotent. So disproportionate are the protagonists that struggle seems useless and tears are vain. The result is that whereas in classical and romantic tragedy the hero is so restless with fate or villainy that he rises superior to disaster even when overwhelmed by it, and thus awakens in us feelings of admiration and reverential awe, social tragedy of Galsworthy's



type moves us rather to sentiments of compassion, in so far as victims of social wrong in his plays are practically impotent to fight against the forces arrayed against them."

"Thus Galsworthy usually refuses to heighten his characters by putting them on pedestals or exalting them to more than ordinary proportions. To do this would be an offence against realism and would at the same time involve a failure to emphasize the social aspect of modern tragedy. Accordingly, he makes the majority of his characters mediocre and even mean, that we may the more readily recognize in them our ordinary selves."—(Coats, *Galsworthy*).

Just as there are no tragic heroes of the dimension of the tragic heroes of the romantic or classical or heroic tragedies, there is also the absence of powerful and crooked villains like Iago and Bosola in Galsworthy's social tragedies. The question of unmitigated villains like Iago and Edmund does not arise when there are no heroes matching their subtlety and crooked ingenuity. The classical conception of a villain is neither accepted nor practised by Galsworthy. He seems to follow Meredith's dictum :

In tragic life, God wot

"No villain need be : Passions spin the plot."

In Galsworthy's tragedies it is the society which is the villain. In the *Silver Box* and *Justice* it is the legal system which is the villain.

Hence, it is true that Galsworthy has no heroes and no villains. He does not take as much interest in the portrayal of his people as in the depiction of social problems.

Q. 13. "This might be said of Shaw's plays that he creates characters who express feelings which they have not got. It might be said of mine that I create characters who have feelings which they cannot express."—(*Galsworthy*)  
Discuss.

Ans. There is much truth in Galsworthy's observation cited above. It makes a clear distinction between the characters of Shaw and those of Galsworthy. Shaw's characters are, indeed, his own mouthpieces and express not their feelings but the feelings of their creator. They are intellectual and rational. They are dominated by wit and ideas rather than by passion and emotion. The characters of Galsworthy, on the other hand, are not intellectual or witty. His are the creatures of emotion and passion which they are unable to express in words. Their hearts are full of their feelings, but they are not the masters of language. His characters, as mentioned by J. W. Marriott, are unable to express their sense of wrong, but their very inarticulateness is moving.

Shaw's Bluntschli, Raina, Morell, Candida, Ann, Tanner (both from *Man and Superman*), King Magnet (in *Apple Cart*) are intellec-



tual characters. The characters of Galsworthy, on the other hand, are emotional. They grapple with the problem of an intellectual nature, but soon emotion and sentiment overpower them, and the intellectual tone is subdued by the emotional temper. For example, in *Loyalties*, the emotion of Christian brotherhood leads people to denounce De Levis, the Jew. They are swept away by the force of social discrimination, and lose themselves in denunciation of the Jew. But they have no language to express their hatred for the Jew.

We can turn to *Silver Box*. The utterances of Mrs. Jones and Mr. Jones lack emotional fervour. They speak in a manner which brings out their emotional excitement, but the words uttered by them are not like lava. They are cold like the burnt-out cinders. Here is an example. Mr. Jones speaks his mind to the magistrate, "I have to do no more than wot he, as I'm a poor man. I've got no money and no friends—he's a toff—he can do what I can't." In *Justice*, the expressions of Falder are emotional, but their expression is not perfect. Falder is a weakling and cannot give adequate expression to his feelings.

Many other examples can be given from Galsworthy's plays to show that his characters are emotional, but they cannot give full-blooded and fervent expression to their feelings. Many of his characters suffer silently without any protest. These are emotionally surcharged nonentities. On the contrary, Shaw's characters suffer less and show more. They have a powerful language and idiom to express themselves.

**Q. 14.** "Justice is a machine that, when someone has once given it the starting push, rolls on of itself." Discuss.

**Ans.** *Justice* deals with the evils and shortcomings of the English system of law and judicial procedure. Galsworthy shook an unthinking public into awareness of the shortcomings of its own legal system and the inevitable repercussions of that system on society. He exposes the effect of prison-life on an unintentional criminal. Galsworthy was specially conversant with the problem and treated it in at least ten of his plays. *Justice* deals with the problem most emphatically. He says that law is an inhuman and malignant institution. It is a blind force and mechanical process that crushes into powder anyone that is caught in its trap. Once an unfortunate person is caught in its network, there is no escape possible for him. It is a huge cage which never lets its victim escape. Once a man is caught in its terrific trap, it continues to work upon him automatically. *Justice*, therefore, is like a roller; once it is given a starting push by someone, it rolls on. Anyone who comes its way is crushed under it.

This principle of justice has been very illustrated by the dramatist in *Justice* through Falder. Falder is an unintentional criminal who has been caught in the trap of law. He is an emotional young man who in a maddening fit of mental distress and emotional crisis, stoops to



commit a forgery. He alters the figures in the cheque to get money to rescue his beloved who is in danger of losing her life. His forgery is detected and he is arrested, tried in the court of law and condemned to three years of rigorous imprisonment. Law is a blind and malignant force. It does not take any cognizances at the circumstance behind a crime. It judges the man on the basis of evidence. It is blind ; it has no humanitarian considerations.

Falder is caught in the trap of Law. The process starts working upon him. Once he is caught he is never free. He gets a job in an office after his release from the jail. But soon his fellow clerks come to know that he is an ex-convict. They mock at him. He feels insulted and humiliated and gives up the job. He tries to get another job by a forged reference. Even James is not willing to offer him a job without a condition. He is ill-treated by his friends and relations because he is an ex-convict. Thus, he faces all sorts of frustrations and humiliations. Rightly says Frome : "The rolling of the chariot-wheels of justice over the body began when it was decided to prosecute him. We are now already at the second stage. If you permit it to go on in the third I would not give—that for him." The judge admits no humanitarian plea of mercy. He says : "The Law is what it is—a majestic edifice, sheltering all of us, each stone of which rests on another." Falder is sent to three years' penal servitude. Here finishes the first stage of the march of Justice.

The second stage begins with Falder's entry into the prison. The playwright adds : "The body has slipped through a door, hardly opened, into that great cage which never again quite lets a man go—the cage of the law." Falder is also subjected to solitary confinement which eats him up. He suffers acutely. He passes through shattering mental distress and emotional crisis. He is rendered helpless and desperate. He lives a subhuman life. He wants to knock out his brain against the prison walls. His mental state is very tortuous. When he is released after three years, he feels he would be able to begin afresh. Here ends the second stage of the process of Justice.

The third stage of the process of law and justice begins after Falder's release from the jail. The greatest malady of law is that it does not let a man forget his past. The prisoner is required to call on the police-station to report about his whereabouts regularly. This does not allow him to forget his past. He never gets peace of mind. The machine of Justice does not stop ; it goes on rolling. The chariot-wheels of Justice come down on him "like cart-load of bricks" ; they flatten him out, and when he does not swell up again, they complain of it. One day Falder fails to report at the police-station, and on this charge and the charge of a forged reference he is arrested again. The horrors of his first imprisonment come to his mind ; he is terrified ; he knows that he cannot face another span of imprisonment. So he jumps down from the roof and breaks his neck and dies. This completes the process of law. Justice, thus, indeed is a machine that, when someone has once given it a starting push, rolls on of itself.



- Q. 15. "The prisons are ill-starred ships manned by luckless crews." Discuss.

Or

- Q. 16. Describe the life of the prisoners in the prison on the basis of the play "Justice".

Ans. Mr. Frome describes the prisons as "ill-starred ships", manned by luckless crews. No one who goes on a voyage in one of these ships ever comes back. He is lost for ever. This is the fate of the convicts confined to prisons. The prisoners who committed crimes under pressure of circumstances and could have become good citizens had they been treated humanely and affectionately during their first imprisonments, become pucca criminals. They become criminals because of the inhuman and sub-human treatment given to them in the prisons. They lose their individuality and personal character. They are reduced to mere mathematical figures. Falder is no more than number 3007. Each one is indiscriminately branded as one of the criminal types.

The Third Act of the play *Justice*, reflects the prisoners' condition in the jail. Moaney, one of the luckless crews, is fed up with solitary confinement. He finds it difficult to pass time in the jail. The work given to him is unsuitable to his past experience and temperament. The prisoners take no interest in mat-making and other work like this. O'Cleary complains of mat-making work: "Oh, I can do it on my head. It's the miserablest stuff—don't take the brains of a mouse." Clifton complains of the continued darkness in the cells of the prison. He is gradually losing his eye-sight. He does not see the sun in the prison-cell.

No visitors are allowed to those given solitary confinement. Hence, the convicts become desperate and lose the balance of their minds. Hours in solitary confinement seem to them years. Falder says: "A day shut up in your cell thinking and brooding as I do, it's longer than a year outside." Therefore, he keeps on pacing impatiently in his cell like a wild bear. He feels like knocking out his head against the wall. He behaves almost like an animal in the cage. Mr. Cokeson says that he would not keep even a dog in solitary confinement. The idea of another span of jail is so terrific to Falder that he commits suicide when arrested again.

Yet the irony of the situation is that the authorities and administrators of law and justice feel that they do good to society by inflicting these atrocities on the convicts. Even the doctors do not bother about the mental states of prisoners; they measure them by their weight and pulse only. Far from preventing and curbing crimes the jails complete the cycle of crimes. "Imprison him as criminal, and I affirm to you that he will be lost," rightly says Mr. Frome of Falder. Falder sums up his experience of the jail in the following words to Cokeson: "The fact is, I seem to be struggling against a



thing that's all round me. I can't explain it ; it is as if I was in a net ; as fast as I cut it here, it grows up there." The chariot-wheels of justice have rolled over him and ruined him for ever.

(Also see Answer to Question No. 44).

- Q. 17. "The law is what it is—a majestic edifice, sheltering all of us, each stone of which rests on another."  
Comment.

Ans. These are the words spoken by the judge while passing the final judgement in Falder's case. The statement is full of irony. It is only idealistic to call the law a majestic edifice, sheltering all of us. In fact it is a big and heavy stone which crushes whosoever comes under its grip. That is what Galsworthy feels. In case of Falder, it is not a sheltering place. Though his crime is less and is a result of compelling circumstances and is motivated out of pity and good feelings for the woman who is victimized and tortured by her husband, yet he suffers a great deal. He is crushed. He is tortured and given the pain of solitary confinement. The trap of law does not allow him to go away. He is caught in it. He tries an escape by getting a job and starting his life afresh, yet the gloomy past and his previous conviction go on haunting his life every time. At last he is arrested on technicalities.

Another corollary of law and justice is imprisonment. It is claimed that imprisonment sobers down the convicts and helps them become good citizens. But in reality, a prisoner becomes a pukka criminal. The jails do not reform him; they pollute his thinking, and create a feeling of revenge against society in the heart of the convict. As a result of imprisonment, the convict is undone. Falder is one such victim. He is a noblehearted, sympathetic and sentimental young man. In a maddening of mental distress and emotional crisis; he is inadvertently led to commit a crime. With this unintentional act begins the operation of law upon him. He could have been saved had he been treated like a patient and not as a criminal. Rightly says Frome, "Imprison him as a criminal, and I affirm to you, that he will be lost." But the administration of law has no humanistic considerations. Law is what it is—a huge cage and contrivance ; it is not a majestic edifice. Under it many innocent men and women are done to death, and the culprits are allowed to go free. Yet these are the faults of the system and its operation. Justice, in itself, is a necessity for disciplining a society.

The basic flaw in the administration of the law lies in its inhuman approach. The offender is not treated as a human being, as a patient, but as a hard criminal. Law takes no cognizance of human psychology and infirmities. It gives no importance to the circumstances in which a crime is committed ; on the contrary, heavily relies on the evidence on record or of witnesses and the acrobatics of the lawyer. Falder is a victim of the maligned and blind process of law.



In his case, law completely ignores the fact that sometimes the worst crimes may be committed with the best of intentions. No compassion and sympathy is shown to the convicts. Cokeson truly says : "If you treat them with kindness, they will do anything for you ; but to shut them up alone, it only makes them savage." Sweedle makes a very pertinent comment : "And, I say, the judge ought to have let him go after that. They have forgot what human nature is like. Whereas we know." He further says, "They come down on you like a cart-load of bricks, flatten you out and when you don't swell up again they complain of it." Falder himself understands his predicament. He remarks, "If we had been treated differently the first time, and put under somebody that could look after us a bit, and not put in prison, not a quarter of us would ever have got there."

The net of law is very long. It does not let the convict go even after he has undergone the term of his sentence. Law requires the convict to remember his past by reporting regularly to the police-station about himself. It does not permit him to start a new clean life. Once a criminal, always a criminal. Falder's remark is true : "I seem to be struggling against a thing that is all round me. I can't explain it. It is as if I was in net ; as fast as I cut it here, it grows up there." This is the general experience of convicts. It is this process of law that leads Falder to commit suicide. Hence, it cannot be a beautiful edifice to shelter us all; it is a trap, a cage to entrap us. This is how Galsworthy feels about justice.

Q. 18. Write a note on the problem of hero in "Justice".

Or

Q. 19. Who is the hero of "Justice"? Do you find any heroic activity in him ?

Ans. In other dramatists the heroes sometimes take out our breath due to their thrilling and pulsating pictures. They are powerful in themselves. They are gigantic personalities. They overshadow the action. Dr. Faustus of Marlowe or Hamlet of Shakespeare is an overshadowing and overpowering personality, magnetic in its existence and wholesome in its effect. The Personalities of Shakespeare and Shaw are never to be found or seen in Galsworthy who is not weak in character-painting but is certainly weak in giving us tall-statured heroes who with their towering personality, Himalayan courage and indomitable will try to do things which only Fate can undo. They are very ambitious and high-souled.

Galsworthy is not interested in producing Shakespearean heroes. His aim is to pose problems and not to delineate characters. Hence, characters are overshadowed by the incident, the problem. In *Justice* Falder is easily the hero of the play. The whole play revolves round him. Yet there is nothing hero-like in him. He is not hero-like due to many reasons. *First of all*, those readers who have gone through the dramas of Shakespeare or the novels of Hardy, will look to Falder as



a petty figure hopelessly nervous as compared with Hamlet or Henc-hard. *Secondly*, it is also due to the fact that Galsworthy himself did not wish to make Falder like the other heroes as in the case of other dramatists. Had he made Falder a surpassing and superseding hero, going above the drama and overshadowing its theme or incident completely, the whole purpose of Galsworthy would have been forfeited. To Galsworthy, Falder was not important, but the incident, the problem of social injustice was important, and it was only for this that he wanted Falder to act as a means to an end. The society has a more important part to play than is assigned to Falder to play. It is society that carves out the destiny of Falder. Falder is not a hero in the conventional sense, because he is not a lofty-statured superhuman being fighting with difficulties and other oddities.

Shakespeare's heroes are made to fall because of the presence in them, of a fault or weakness which is soaked by the malice of the world. Galsworthy, on the other hand, intentionally chooses weak characters because they easily succumb to a mighty tyranny—here in the case of *Justice* it is the civilized society—that crushes him mercilessly.

Falder is a weak and nervous type of youth. He is open to temptation. This is a sign of emotionalism. His impulsive and thoughtless emotion is fanned into flame by the fan of romantic feelings. He is, therefore, not fit to be called a hero. He has no stamina to confront misfortune, resist temptation, grapple with difficulties, undo hardships, face the oddities of time and bear the slaps of society in which he lives. When he is caught, he at once confesses that he has tampered with the cheque.

Galsworthy keeps his hero alive throughout the first three Acts. Eventually, Galsworthy, in order to show the cruelty and the treachery of society causes Falder to commit suicide. Falder fails to show any singular trait of his character that could leave an indelible imprint of its laudable strength on the mind of the reader. Whether good or bad, the characters of Shakespeare have a strength that can at one time turn the flow of the wind and check the tides of the sea. But in Falder, there is not a figment of it.

So, Falder is the hero of the drama. He is the hero in the sense that the main topic of the drama centres round him and the tragic gloom thickens and presses round him till the last, and forces him to commit suicide. He is not a hero in the conventional sense in which Othello or Macbeth is a hero. He is not a superhuman creature who is of a loftier stature than his fellow-beings. He does not bring his fall from very great heights because of a fatal flaw in his character, nor does Fate play any role in his downfall. He is an ordinary, even a weak-willed and weak-charactered man. He is nervous and impulsive. Society is responsible for his tragedy.

**Q. 20.** Write a note on the 'cheque-altering' episode and bring out its dramatic importance.



*Or*

- Q. 21. "The single minute that urged Falder to alter the cheque also wrote therein the beginning of his end." Comment.

*Or*

- Q. 22. Describe in your own words the forgery of the cheque.

*Or*

- Q. 23. What were the conditions that compelled Falder to forge the cheque?

**Ans.** The first Act is the cause-giving scene of the beginning of the end of Falder's life. Falder is only a petty clerk in the office of the Hows. The cheque-altering episode takes place in the first Act of the play. We see Falder and Cokeson. Both are clerks in the solicitors' firm. Falder is an assistant clerk. He is a dutiful and conscientious young man of twenty three. He is honest, trustworthy and highly responsible. Everybody in the office is pleased with him.

Suddenly, he falls in love with a married woman, Ruth Honeywill. Ruth's husband is a very cruel and heartless monster. He treats her most cruelly and beats her. He is given to excessive drinking and in the fit of drunkenness he inflicts all kinds of tortures on her. He even tries to strangle her to death. The poor woman has to bear all this inhumanity, because law does not allow legal divorce on the score of harsh treatment alone. Under these circumstances, she happens to meet Falder. Falder feels a great deal of sympathy for her, and this sympathy gradually changes into passionate and deep love between the two. Both Falder and Ruth deeply love each other and are prepared to make any sacrifice for each of them.

Early one morning, in the month of July, Ruth meets Falder. All her clothes are torn and she is hardly able to breathe. She tells Falder that her husband tried to strangle her to death that night. Falder sees deep marks of fingers all round her neck. He is horrified to see blood collected in her eyes. She says that if she goes back to her husband, he would surely kill her. Falder goes mad with grief, fear and horror. He wants to help her but he has no money. He thinks of going away with her to some foreign country where they could peacefully live as husband and wife. But money is the problem before him. Falder is torn between his deep affection for Ruth and his helplessness to protect her.

In this disturbed state of mind he goes to his office. He is not able to work properly. He keeps on pacing in the room like a wild bear. His mental agony and emotional distress make him almost insane. In this emotional crisis he forgets the sense of right and wrong, good and evil. Just at this moment a fellow-clerk gives him



a cheque for nine pounds and asks him to go to the bank for encashing it. Presently, a guilty thought flashes across his mind. Supposing, he added a 'zero' after the figure of 'nine' and 'ty' after the word 'nine'. Thus, he cashes the cheque for ninety pounds in place of nine pounds. All this idea of altering the cheque comes to him like a flash in a moment of insanity. Everything is done in four minutes. He goes to the bank, presents the cheque and gets the money.

As soon as he takes the money in his hand, good sense recurs to him. He now realizes the crime that he has committed. He is full of repentance. He wishes that the deed could be undone. But it is now too late. He has already been caught in the mess of crime and guilt. One crime leads to the other. In order to hide one lie, one has to speak a hundred lies. So is the case with Falder. In order to hide his crime, he commits another crime, that is he changes the counterfoil of the cheque after the return of Walter How. Human frailty prevents him from confessing his crime before his masters.

Once Falder is in the trap, he must find a way to complete the process. He waits for a few days and gets an opportunity to change the counterfoil of the cheque in the cheque-book.

Thus, starts the tragedy of Falder's life. Falder has shown no smile of youthhood. He has played no amorous game of romance. He has to taste only the bitter fruit of his romantic philanthropy. The forgery spells his doom and explains everything about the conduct of the society and Falder. Ultimately he is arrested, tried and sent to jail.

*(Also see Answer to Question No. 32)*

Q. 24. Summarize in your own words the arguments of Frome in favour of Falder.

*Or*

Q. 25. Give the salient arguments given by Frome in order to save Falder from punishment.

*Or*

Q. 26. "Galsworthy's spokesman is Frome who leaves no stone unturned in moving the Judge and the spectators on the plea of humanitarian grounds in respect of punishment to Falder." Discuss.

*Or*

Q. 27. Summarize the arguments for defence put forth by Frome.

Ans. Falder was tried in the court of law on the charge of felony and forgery. Mr. Frome, a young intelligent counsel, pleaded for defence in favour of Falder. The defence counsel first confessed the crime committed by Falder, but adopted the humanitarian line of compassion and explained in detail the circumstances under the



compulsion of which Falder committed that act of altering the cheque. This defence forms the part of the second Act of the play.

Frome proceeds to establish that the crime was committed in such a state of mental excitement and emotional crisis that the prisoner could not be held wholly responsible for his deed. He argued that Falder committed the crime in a fit of temporary insanity. Therefore, just as a person is absolved of the crime of suicide committed in a fit of emotional insanity, Falder should also be given the same benefit on the score of emotional state of his mind. If a man can be absolved of suicide because of insanity, why should not a man be absolved of a lesser crime under the same insinuating circumstances. So, it would be unjust to regard him as guilty for an action committed in a weak moment of excitement and maddening emotional distress.

He further says that Falder is a young and inexperienced man of twenty-three, passionately loved a married woman Ruth Honeywill. She lived a very hard and miserable life with her cruel and heartless husband. Her husband behaved like a monster. He often tried even to murder her. The poor woman had no escape from him. She could not get even legal separation, because law did not allow divorce on the score of harsh treatment alone. Therefore, she had no legal way of escape from him. It was under such a situation that she happened to meet Falder who developed a deep passionate love out of sympathy for her. He knew that if he did not help her, she would be compelled either to go to a Shelter Home or to live by the sale of her body. Therefore, moved by his passionate love and compassion for her he planned to go away with her to some foreign country where they could live as husband and wife. It is true, he said, that this decision of Falder was legally wrong. But from the moral and human points of view he was quite justified in taking this decision.

One day Ruth's husband beat her badly. He tried to strangle her to death. She came to Falder panting without breath. Blood was in her eyes. Her clothes were torn. She said that if she went back again, her husband would surely kill her. This situation greatly distressed and agitated Falder. Falder went mad with grief and excitement. He was all the more distressed because he could not help her for want of money. In this emotional fit of insanity he forgot the sense of right and wrong, and good and bad. In this state of mind, he came across a cheque for nine pounds which he changed for ninety.

Frome puts forth a second line of defence too. He pleads for defence on humanitarian grounds. He says that Falder is not a professional criminal. He argues that Falder should be treated as a patient rather than as a criminal. He says: "Falder has not a strong face; but neither has he a vicious face. He is just the sort of man who would easily become the prey of his emotions."



In his closing speech, Frome repeats that the crime was committed at a time when the prisoner was not responsible for his action. The defence has not tried to invest a simple act of forgery with romantic glamour. Frome has only tried to show the background of life behind the commission of the crime. The sight of brutal violence disturbs any civilized man, and when Falder saw his beloved being ill-treated, he could not bear it. He got mad. Falder was strained to breaking point, and he was in an irresponsible condition when he committed the crime. He should be treated as a patient and not as a prisoner. The crime was the work of a moment; the rest has followed inevitably. His further acts and his failure to confess are evidence of a weak character. Frome ends with an eloquent indictment of the ruthless machine of justice that destroys men, like the prisoner, and grinds them to pieces. If he is given a chance, he may still be saved. Frome rightly says: "Justice is a machine that, when someone has once given it the starting-push, roll on of itself." The chariot-wheels of justice roll over thousands of innocent promising young men from day to day. This is a summary of Frome's defence of Falder.

Galsworthy speaks through Frome. When Frome pleads, it means Galsworthy is pleading. Galsworthy wants redemption for Falder. He feels that the young man should not be treated harshly. His view is that jails are nasty places and a criminal is made a brute there.

- Q. 28. Summarize in your own words the arguments of Mr. Cleaver.

*Or*

- Q. 29. Give a summary of the arguments for prosecution against Falder.

*Or*

- Q. 30. "In the second Act, Cleaver is the adversary of Galsworthy." Discuss.

Ans. In the second Act, we see the case of Falder being tried by the Jury in the conventional way and the traditional process. Every case has got two angles. One counsel tries to save the culprit, the other tries to prove his guilt. Cleaver is the counsel for the Crown. He is, thus, the spokesman of the law of the land according to which Falder is being tried and must be punished. He is a very fastidious-natured and austere man. He is not a progressive but a conventional person. He is generally against the criminal and has no consideration for the circumstances and emotional states of mind in which a crime is committed. He is hard-hearted too.

At the very outset, he has confidentially reported his arguments of the case. From his arguments, we find that he is insisting on the punishment of the criminal, that is, Falder. But he is a perfect lawyer and asks some questions:



"*Cleaver.* (*Rapping his desk*) Does "funny" mean mad ?

*Cokeson.* Non mad, fun—

*Cleaver.* Very well ! Now you say he had his collar unbuttoned? Was it a hot day ?

*Cokeson.* Ye-es ; I think it was.

*Cleaver.* And did he button it when you called his attention to it ?

*Cokeson.* Ye-es, I think he did.

*Cleaver.* Would you say that denoted insanity ?"

Thus, Cleaver, the counsel for prosecution strongly refutes the plea for defence put forth by Frome. Frome has tried to defend Falder on two points : (1) Falder committed the crime in a mental excitement and emotional distress amounting to temporary insanity; (2) that Falder was not a criminal type, his case be considered on humanitarian grounds of compassion, his heat of passion, infatuation and attachment for a woman in distress. But Cleaver is not ready to treat Falder as a patient, but as an accomplice and clever criminal, who not only altered the cheque but also made changes in the counter-foil to hide his guilt, and his attempt might have led to somebody else's imprisonment.

**Q. 31.** Describe in your own words how the Judge passed the sentence of three years of imprisonment on Falder.

**Ans.** The Judge and Jury heard the pleas of the Counsel for Defence and of the Counsel for the Crown. Both the pleaders pleaded the case well. Mr. Frome tried to defend Falder on his pleas of mercy, compassion and the circumstances in which the crime was committed, the tender age of the criminal, his innocent face, and his inexperience of life. Mr. Cleaver argued for the prosecution of Falder for his guilt confessed by himself, his objectionable relationship with a married woman, and his attempt to pass his guilt to the other fellow-clerk, Davis. After hearing the plea for defence, the evidences of the witnesses, the personal statement of the prisoner and the arguments of the counsel for prosecution, the Judge made his own assessment and passed his judgement accordingly.

First of all, the Judge gave his own impressions about the case. Summing up the plea for defence, the Judge said that it had been argued that the prisoner committed the crime in a fit of mental excitement and emotional distress amounting to temporary insanity. Therefore, he suggested to the members of the Jury that there were two alternatives before them. They could either return the verdict of guilty, or the verdict of guilty but insane. In case they returned the verdict of guilty but insane, it was necessary for them to make sure that the prisoner had gone so insane that he had absolutely no sense of what he was doing. In other words, they should make



sure that the prisoner was so insane as to be a fit case for admission to the lunatic asylum. If the motive behind the crime was proved, the plea of insanity could not be admitted. The Judge also advised the jurymen not to attach any importance to the plea of youth, love, temptation or attachment. With this suggestion he asked the jurymen to consult one another and arrive at an unanimous decision.

The members of the jury consulted one another and unanimously returned the verdict of guilty against Falder. On hearing the verdict of the Jury, the Judge rose to announce his judgment. The Judge said that the plea for defence was really speaking, nothing but a mercy appeal. The plea that the crime was committed in a fit of maddening excitement amounting to temporary insanity could not be admitted. The Judge further said that the counsel for defence did not so much argue for the defence of the prisoner as he arraigned the present system of law.

Cleaver says that Falder has admitted his guilt. The only plea for defence is that the crime was committed in the heat of excitement amounting to temporary insanity. Cleaver says that the story of love and infatuation has been manufactured only to hide the crime of the prisoner. An attempt has been made to throw a veil of glamour over simple and unqualified act of forgery. Turning to Frome he says, "Divested of the romantic glamour which my friend is casting over the case, is there anything but an ordinary forgery? The defence has only tried to show the proverbial woman and put her in the box to give a romantic glow to this affair. It is an ingenious way of getting round the law." Otherwise it is a simple story. The prisoner is a young man, in good health and sane mind. He commits an act of forgery with a pre-conceived plan to help his beloved. It is, thus, a clear case of cheating with a motive.

Cleaver refutes the plea of insanity too. The evidences given by the witnesses and the prisoner's own statement establish that the prisoner was not insane either ten minutes before the commission of the crime nor ten minutes after. How could it be possible then to say that he was insane in between these two points of time. He argues: "A man who is sane at ten minutes past one, and sane at fifteen minutes past, may for the purpose of avoiding the consequences of a crime, call himself insane between those two points of time." The case, he said, was so simple and clear that there was no sense wasting time over explaining it again.

He also opposes the mercy appeal. He argues in the court that no compassion could reasonably be shown to the prisoner on the score of youth, temptation and infatuation. It would be unjust to let the prisoner go unpunished. Mr. Cleaver says that there were two more points which did not justify the plea for mercy to be admitted. In the first place, the prisoner tried to pass over the guilt to others, (e.g., his fellow clerk Davis), and secondly the prisoner's attachmentf



to a married woman itself is a moral and social crime. So Cleaver says, "The offence with which the prisoner is charged, is one of the most serious offences known to our law; and there are certain features in this case, such as the suspicion which he allowed to rest on his innocent fellow-clerk, and his relations with this married woman, which will render it difficult for you to attach too much importance to such pleading."

The judge could not give any concession to the prisoner on grounds of mercy. "The law is what it is—a majestic edifice sheltering all of us, each stone of which rests on another. I am concerned only with its administration." That is what the judge says.

The Judge further adds : "However I might wish, I am not able to justify to my conscience a plea for mercy which has a basis inimical to morality. I cannot feel it in accordance with my duty to exercise the powers I have in your favour. You will go to penal servitude for three years."

Q. 32. What is the significance of the first Act of "Justice" ?

Or

Q. 33. "The first Act completely and clearly sets in motion wheel of the crux problems which Galsworthy takes to expose later on." Discuss.

Or

Q. 34. The first Act is a clear picture of the case for the conventional and traditional social effect of which Galsworthy girds up his loins in order to show its absurdity and to uphold the human aspect of crimes and criminals."

Or

Q. 35. "The first Act of 'Justice' is the mirror of the general case of social tragedy taken in Galsworthian sense, the effect of which is seen in the last Act." Comment.

Ans. The play, *Justice* consists of four Acts. The division of the play into Acts is, thus, different from the Shakespearean tragedy which runs into five Acts. Similarly, it is different from the Greek tragedy which essentially consists of a chorus. Galsworthy's Play, *Justice*, is further different in as much as its third Act is divided into scenes and others are not divided. Whereas the dramatist maintains the unity of time up to the third Act, in the fourth Act he portrays a scene two years after the first. The first Act has no scenes. It is staged at one and the same place. It is Cokeson's room. Time is about the year 1910. The scene opens on a morning of July. The room is old-fashioned, furnished with old mahogany and leather furniture. In a line can be seen a number of tin boxes and



plans and charts. There are three doors. Two of them are close together in the centre of the wall. One of these doors leads to the outer office, which is divided from the managing clerk's room by a wooden and glass partition. When the door of the outer office is opened, it shows the wide outer door leading to the stone stairway of the building. The second of these centre doors leads to the junior clerk's room. The third leads to the partners' room. The managing clerk, Cokeson, is sitting at his table checking up entries in a pass-book murmuring the numbers to himself. He is an old man of sixty, wearing spectacles. He is rather short, with a bald and an honest-looking grim face. He is wearing an old short coat and grey-black woollen trousers.

"Justice" revolves round the question of justice. Falder is an assistant clerk at the office of the Hows. The first Act opens our eyes. It fills our mind with thought. It sharpens our wisdom and intelligence to try it, on the anticipation of the further outcome of Falder's arrest. Falder is a young man of twenty-three. He is robust and has got a natural inclination for women. He is quite unselfish. But he is romantic. His romance is mixed with pathos. His feelings are touched to the core. He is poor, yet still he has a heart to help others who are in distress.

The opening scene not only provides an explanation of the theme but also supplies an introduction to all the principal characters of the play. It is in the first Act we have the exposition, and are introduced to the principal characters of the play. What is more, we are made to have a gleaming into the dominating features of the principal characters.

Cokeson is sitting in his office when Honeywill comes to meet Falder. Sweedle announces to Cokeson about her arrival. Falder is away at that time. Ruth enters and pleads with Cokeson to allow her an interview with Falder, for it's a matter of life and death for her. Meanwhile Falder comes in. Cokeson gives them a minute and leaves the room.

From their conversation we learn that the young women is being ill-treated by her husband. Falder is in love with her, and they have already decided to run away taking Ruth Honeywill's children with them. Falder has already purchased the tickets. He asks her to meet him at the booking-office at 11-45 that night, and gives her seven pounds for incidental expenses. As they kiss passionately, Cokeson returns. Ruth turns and goes out. Cokeson admonishes Falder for the improper use of the office premises. He also tells Falder that of late he has been neglecting his duties.

As Falder goes into his room, the partners, James How, and Walter How, father and son, enter. James verifies the cheque and finds that one cheque has been altered. It is a cheque drawn by Walter for nine pounds and it was altered for nine and sixpence. Cokeson says



that he gave the cheque to another clerk, Davis, who sailed to Australia on Monday. The suspicion now falls on young Davis.

The cashier, Cowley, is called in. He says he can easily recognize the young man who cashed the cheque. James calls Falder to come out from the clerk's room. As Falder comes out, the bank cashier recognizes him as the young man who cashed the cheque. Falder is now interrogated by James ; and after sometime Falder confesses that he altered the cheque. He begs James to pardon him and promises to return the money. But James is determined to prosecute him. The pleadings of Cokeson and Walter are of no use. Meanwhile, the detective Wister is called ; he comes in, and arrests Falder on the charge of felony.

It is in this scene that we come to know that a young man who committed a crime under the pressure of circumstances is arrested. Without arrest there would have been no trial, no jail-going, and the mission of the dramatist could not have been realized. The dramatist wants to show the evils of the prison system, of solitary confinement and the shortcomings of the judiciary system.

During the course of the action in the scene, we learn about the character of Cokeson, James, Walter and Falder. Cokeson is an elderly gentleman, working as a managing clerk in the office of the solicitors, James and Walter How, for long time. He is reputed for his honesty. James himself pays a compliment on this score to Cokeson when he says : "There's some thing in character.....Your story would sound 'd—d' thin to any one who didn't know you." We also know Cokeson for a kind-hearted man, who has always cherished a great affection for his subordinates. When the suspicion first falls on young Davis, Cokeson is full of pity for the young man and his poor wife. Next he tries to persuade James not to upset Falder who is a nervous young man. He pleads with the senior solicitor to pardon Falder for his first offence. Cokeson is really sad when Falder is being taken away by the detective.

We also learn much about the characters of James How and Walter How. There is a striking contrast between the father and the son. James is a man of principles, very practical and formal, and has very rigid notions about justice. He is somewhat Victorian. He has a high sense of dignity of office and cannot brook an offence committed in his sacred office. Above all, he has an acute brain that makes him bring round Falder to an open confession of his offence. Walter on the other hand, is a young man of the easy-go-lucky type. And he is very kind and sympathetic. He joins Cokeson in pleading for mercy to be shown to Falder.

Falder is a young man, very sensitive and nervous, and easily becomes upset. He committed the offence evidently under a serious stress and in dire circumstances. It is his love for Ruth and pity for her and her children's distress that made him stoop to such a folly. He is very weak of character.



Of Ruth we know just as much as we are required to know for the purpose of the play. She is wedded to an untidy, cruel man who habitually ill-treats her. She becomes fondly attached to Falder, and she has agreed to run away with him.

The purpose of Galsworthy behind writing *Justice* was to ridicule the penal system of England. The heart of a social reformer in him compelled him to do something in the interest of the sufferers who suffered under the hard and rigid law of the country. He chose Falder as the finest character with a humanitarian touch for his crime. He wanted to show that the law of the land is so blind that it does not take into account any humanistic aspect of the background and impulse behind which lay the cause of a culprit's crime?

Galsworthy's whole scheme is made clear in the first Act, and popular sympathy is awakened. The opening scene leads us to the scenes that follow. We already have an idea about the nature of justice that is meted out to the young man. And the dramatist has already succeeded in making Falder win all our sympathy.

Q. 36. Bring out the importance of the Trial Scene in "Justice".

Or

Q. 37. What is the significance of Act Two in the play?

Or

Q. 38. Describe in your own words the trial of Falder.

Or

Q. 39. What is the defence plea in Falder's case? Could it withstand the onslaught of the prosecution? What is Jury's finding and Judge's verdict?

Or

Q. 40. Falder commits forgery and it is admitted. How does all this happen?

Or

Q. 41. What point is there in putting up a defence plea when it is admitted that Falder committed forgery? What line of argument is adopted by the counsel for the defence to acquit him of the charge and to treat him with leniency?

Or

Q. 42. "The second Act is an exposition of the Galsworthian propaganda in "Justice." Discuss.

Or

Q. 43. "In the second Act, we find logistic approach to the humanitarian aspect of punishment." Comment and elucidate.



**Ans.** The second Act is the scene of a court. It is popularly known as the trial scene. Falder is on trial in the court. He is being tried on the charges of felony and forgery. He has cheated his master. That is why he has violated or defied the law. When he has defied the law, it has taken its revenge. He is imprisoned. He is a culprit now. So the atmosphere of the second Act is the severe and strict atmosphere of a court. It is not a romantic garden for a newly-wedded couple. Nor is it some poetic power under the scintillating shades of which he may write lines of verse. It is a place where the fight between man and law is decided. It is the place where the law is the ruler as well as the ruled, where it both kills and saves man.

In the second Act we have the exposition of the main issue, that is, the penal system of England and its treatment of criminals. In the first Act, we had the cause of the crime, in the second we have the justification of the punishment that the law uniformly imposes on a culprit. The second Act is more important than the first for it opens our eyes to the grim truth. Falder is going to be punished and there is no humanistic consideration before law. His counsel uselessly tries to pursue the Judge and the Jury to consider the age and the circumstances of the criminal. The man commits crime in a momentary impulse, but he is going to be punished all through his life.

The dramatist has placed in this Act a powerful controversy between the law as it is and the law as it should be. Frome symbolizes the new approach to law. Without the court scene and without the intelligent pleadings of the lawyers, our sympathy towards Falder should not have been whetted.

At the time the second Act begins, Cleaver has already finished presenting the case for the prosecution. It is now Frome's turn to present the case for the defence. The offence is admitted already and the evidence is conclusive. So the defence has only one course open; that is, to show what Cokeson called "extenuating circumstance". Frome makes an attempt to show that Falder was under a fit of temporary madness when he committed the crime, and that this madness was the result of acute distress of the mind. Frome narrates the story of Falder's tragic infatuation for Ruth who was unhappily married to an ogre-like husband.

The Counsel for Defence, Frome presents his case with Cokeson as his first witness. Then he examines Ruth and finally Falder. Cokeson and Ruth do not say clearly that Falder was mad when he committed the crime. Cokeson describes Falder's state as 'funny' and 'jumpy'. But Cleaver successfully shows that these vague terms have no relation with the word 'mad'. Ruth Honeywill states that Falder was very much upset, but was not mad. Falder says that he was half-frantic or mad when he committed the offence. He does not remember what he did when the cheque came into his hands. That closes the evidence for defence.



Frome concludes his arguments stating that any man in this civilized society would do the same thing as done by Falder, when he witnessed the cruelty to which a humble woman, Ruth, was constantly subjected. Falder's weak character is clearly enough his misfortune. He should be treated as a patient and not as a criminal. Frome says, "I beg you not to return a verdict that may thrust him back into prison and brand him for ever.....Imprison him as a criminal, and I affirm to you that he will be lost."

The Counsel for the Crown, Mr. Cleaver, proceeds to disprove the theory of the defence. He reduces Frome's plea of temporary insanity to an absurdity. He points out that when the evidence for the defence is put together, it would then appear that "a man who is sane at ten minutes past one, and sane at fifteen minutes past one, may for the purposes of avoiding the consequences of a crime, call himself insane between these two points of time."

The Jury return a verdict of guilty, and the Judge sentences Falder to penal servitude for three years. The Judge says that an appeal for mercy cannot be entertained in the case of Falder, since there are many factors which aggravated his crime. The trial scene exhibits the high legal knowledge possessed by Galsworthy, and is able to heighten suspense. The playwright presents both the sides of the case with ingenuity and impartiality although his sympathies lie with the victim. The trial scene is the very nerve of the play.

It is in the trial scene that the dramatist presents certain problems which were the common problems facing the society of his day. There is first the problem of a married woman who has been constantly ill-treated by her cruel husband, but she cannot seek a legal divorce merely on the basis of her husband's cruelty. Some other charge besides this can only authorize her to seek a divorce. Society does not find it convenient to help her. Justice is blind to her plight. If a young man attempts to rescue her from the tragic situation, he is branded as having immoral dealings with a married woman.

There is yet another problem touched upon by Galsworthy. He means to suggest that law should take into consideration not only the nature of a crime but also the circumstances and the mental state of the offender under which the crime is committed. In other words, he wants that men like Falder should be treated more as patients than as criminals.

Also touched upon in this Act is the problem of prison system, especially solitary confinement. Frome, the counsel for the defence, has very ably pointed out the evils of prison system. He says that if the prisoner be found guilty and imprisoned, he would in all probability become a real criminal. He asks the Judge and the Jury, "Is he to become a member of the luckless crews that man those dark, ill-starred ships called prisons? Is that to be his voyage from which so few return?"



Galsworthy has presented the problems but offered no solutions. But one can easily discern where his sympathies lie.

- Q. 44. What is the significance of the third Act in "Justice"? What light does it throw on the author's social outlook?

Or

- Q. 45. "The purpose of Galsworthy in the third Act is ardently to expose the inhuman and callous prison-life, and the impact of its atmosphere on the criminals." Discuss.

Or

- Q. 46. Write an essay on the dramatic importance of the third Act.

Or

- Q. 47. "The third Act is the screen on which we see the focus through the lenses of Galsworthy's mind of prison life as it callously deals with criminals without the least regard to their psychological and mental excitements." Comment in the light of your study of the third Act of 'Justice'."

Ans. The first Act has got no scenes. Similarly, the second Act too has no scenes. But the third Act is divided into three scenes. In the first scene, Galsworthy starts his work as a dramatic propagandist. He presented the problem in the first Act. He showed the penal reaction to the crime. This we read in the second Act. Falder has been sentenced to three years' rigorous imprisonment. The third Act shows us the real picture of jail-life.

In the third Act, we see Galsworthy, like Shaw, as a propagandist. Essentially, Shaw and Galsworthy are very different from each other but so far as the purpose of propaganda is concerned, they are one and the same. Their methods may be different but the purpose of their propaganda is to make a beeline for the single destination. Their purpose is to fight for the enlightened humanism. In Shaw, there is an exaggeration of wrongs and abuses. There is a bit of irony, wit, pun, etc., in Galsworthy. Galsworthy is a realist in his approach. He does not exaggerate. He is like a photographer who represents the reality. He is afraid of nobody. He is fearless, bold, frank, sincere and impartial.

The third Act is important for showing the jail-life, the horrors of the solitary confinement and the horrible conditions of the prisoners. It is through this Act that the dramatist is able to criticize the jail administration of the day. The play is indeed a protest against the inhuman treatment of prisoners in the jail, and the third Act does this job nicely. In this Act, Galsworthy's problem motive merges into the propaganda motive, so that what in the line of his great contem-



porary, Bernard Shaw, though the technique of the two masters is necessarily quite different. The presentation of the crude and harsh prison system, especially in the aspect of it which is called the "cellular confinement", and the criticism passed on it by such humane characters as Cokeson and the good Governor, and the presentation of the pitiful effects of the system on criminals of different types and ages, are so emphatically stressed that here Galsworthy at times seems to speak through them in his own person, and to give us a clear glimpse into his humane social outlook.

In the first scene of Act third we have the preliminary view of jail life in the report of the Warder, Wooder, about an old jail-bird's attempts to escape by making a rude saw out of a piece of iron. The rather humane and sympathetic Governor wonders why the prisoners in their cells should be so upset by a noise made by another prisoner by banging on his cell door. The prison Chaplain is indifferent; his heart is callous towards these vicious criminals, and he is of opinion that the perverted will of these wicked prisoners has to be broken by rude treatment.

Next, there is an interview of Cokeson with the Governor and the Chaplain. The good-natured Cokeson is horrified at the scene of the mechanical exercise of the zealously guarded prisoners in the prison-yard. He has come in to impress on the Governor the necessity of dealing kindly and humanely with a nervous, sensitive youth, like Falder, and if possible, to arrange for an interview of Ruth with the prisoner. The heartless jail discipline, he says, is quite ineffective in reforming the criminals. It rather makes them desperate and sink lower into criminality. The Governor listens to his argument with silent approval. But he is tied by the rigours of jail rules. The Chaplain, a callous, inhuman epicure, forces Cokeson to speak out some home truths. We have also the jail doctor's mechanical way of certifying to the physical and mental well-being of the criminal, Falder, without any care for his mental and moral interior.

In scene II, we have some practical illustrations of the effects of the solitary confinement on criminals. Each of the criminals interviewed by the Governor is seen to reach in a different way to his solitary confinement. But all are so terribly afflicted that they all are ruined and lost forever.

So it is in this Act that the dramatist lashes at man's inhumanity to another man. He points out the unimaginative stupidity of the civilized society in harming itself and ruining so many individuals in the name of social justice, social security, protection of social morality and other excellent names. These pleas are glibly mouthed by guardians of the society—its legislators, administrators, judges, etc. In Scene III of the Act Falder is exhibited to the readers or audience in his solitary cell-life all alone with no witness to note his agony. Only the author and the audience are to drink their fill from the cup of horror that the jail administration has prepared for an unwary



criminal and holds up to his lips. Falder is broken, nervously prostrated, left without even the power to resist his impulse, the very image of a walking shadow.

Without this heart appealing realistic scene of the jail-life, our sympathy, particularly towards Falder and generally towards all the criminals, culprits, or convicts, would never have been aroused. The picture of prison is dismal and soul-killing. It is not the least human. Reading the third Act of *Justice* is to recall our study of Dickens' *David Copperfield*. The reaction of jail-life or its atmosphere is different on different criminals. There are criminals like Mooney who is serving the fourth spell of penal servitude. He is a confirmed and seasoned criminal and thinks of breaking in and breaking out. The jails are criminal manufacturing factories turning out confirmed criminals of the first visitors. Falder's case is absolutely different. The whole scene is a pathetic drama of weeping, sighing and sobbing humanity.

The third Act absolutely ridicules the idea that jails are reformative homes. In fact they are destructive hells. Thus, the third Act has got a special importance in the scheme of Galsworthy's intention of writing *Justice*. The Act shows the transparent absurdity of solitary confinement and its callous impact on the life of the criminals.

Q. 48. What is the importance of the fourth Act in "*Justice*"?

Or

Q. 49. "The last Act of '*Justice*' is the tearful end of Falder." Discuss.

Or

Q. 50. "The problem posed by Galsworthy in the first Act, pleaded in the second Act, and exposed in the third Act shows its consequences in the fourth Act." Comment.

Or

Q. 51. "The fourth Act is the tragic end of a sad story." How?

In the third Act, in all the three scenes, Galsworthy has depicted the effect of solitary confinement on the minds of prisoners. He has shown how wasteful, inhuman and cruel it is to imprison a man solitarily. In Act IV, Galsworthy holds up with graphic realism the effect that a criminal is bound to suffer at the hands of society even after he has fully atoned for his crime for years behind iron bars. Falder feels that iron has gone home into his soul. As an ex-convict, he must be secretive, must forge or misrepresent again to earn his living, and above all, must report to the Police every night. Legal system is itself the evil, the villain that compels man to become a permanent criminal. The chariot-wheels of Justice roll on and pursue the victim beyond the gate of the jail into the larger society.



The fourth Act shows the after-effects of the prison-life on a person released from the jail. The culprit or the criminal punished for reformation is turned to be a creature just opposite to what the law aims at. The culprit is either made a seasoned culprit, as in the case of Moaney, O'Cleary, etc., or a wretched person to suffer greater tragedy like Falder. The law has bereft Falder of all the chances, possibilities and opportunities to lead a noble life. He is no more the citizen of a modern democratic society. He is a wandering Jew. The Fourth Act, therefore, tells us to remember Carlyle's statement that 'some by evils rise while others by virtue fall.' This is applicable to Falder.

The fourth Act shows Falder moving in the open world but without a sympathetic helper. The world sees him with a jaundiced eye. He can knock at no door for help. He is completely sullied by time and circumstances. The fourth Act is an opportunity for Galsworthy to fling social criticism of the injustice meted out to Falder. Galsworthy wants to draw the attention of the men in the upper ranks of society, well-to-do professionals, legislators and judges, lawyers, and jail administrators, even the snug middle-class men and women to the defects of the penal system of England.

The consequences that follow in the wake of Falder's coming out of the prison are deeply significant. If he is already nerveracked, despaired, and broken by the inhumanity of prison-life, the treatment he receives from society as an exconvict makes him equally desperate. Expressing his agony after his release from the jail, Falder tells Coke-son : "The fact is I am struggling against a thing that is all round me. I can't explain it ; it's as if I was in a net ; as fast as I cut it here, it grows up there." Then he adds, "They talk about giving you your deserts. Well, I think I've had just a bit over." There is little exaggeration in Falder's statement. In reality, society does not treat the exconvicts very well.

Falder went to see his sister, but his brother-in-law did not allow the meeting, because he was ashamed of Falder. The clerks, when they came to know that he was an ex-convict, began to jeer at him and mocked at him. Consequently, he left the job. He gets another job by forging a reference, but that too does not continue for long. He approaches his old employer, James How, who is reluctantly willing to give him a job provided he gives up Ruth, who is the only thing and hope left in his life.

At last, Falder is arrested again for forging a reference and not reporting to the police. In shame and despair and agony of the coming tortures in the jail, he commits suicide by jumping down the stairs and breaking his neck.

The fourth Act, thus, shows us the indifference of the rich and the highly placed or highly-stationed people of the society towards the weak and the down-trodden, the socially degraded and the poor, the



wretched and the uncared for. They lack a complete understanding of what human nature in its practical aspect is. They are absolutely unaware of the realities, the strong points and the weak points of human nature. Temptation plays a very important role in human nature. This very factor of human nature was nowhere prized, valued, computed or considered throughout the play.

The fourth Act is an indirect endorsement of the modern view of the sociologists who say that the rigid or rigorous law is incompetent to deal with human nature in its reformatory perspective. The rigorousness of penal system makes a brute of a man. It is the duty of the framers of law to heed the mature advice of seasoned sociologists in the field of criminology. It is the law that makes a criminal's life hellish and unworthy. Sometime the criminal is not so much at fault as he is treated by law. The result is that the effect of punishment is catastrophic instead of being reformatory.

**Q. 52.** Contrast the addresses to the Jury by the two counsels, Frome and Cleaver, as regards their manner and style, pointing out clearly what view of justice each takes.

**Ans.** Frome, the Defence Counsel, and Cleaver, the Prosecution Counsel, are bound, by their respective interests in the opposite sides of the case, to take different views of the offence of Falder. Consequently, they present quite contrasted views of justice to be meted out to the accused. One is interested in seeing that his client is not punished; the other is interested in seeing that the charge is proved and the offender punished. The opposite viewpoints of the two lawyers give Galsworthy his opportunity to present to us two opposite views of justice; he states the case for the defence with as much detachment as he does the case for the prosecution. Galsworthy takes great care to present the problem of justice from two opposite views through the mouths of these two lawyers.

Frome's view is Walter's view. Walter How was of the opinion that Falder should not be prosecuted for his first offence. He should be given a chance because "it must have been a temptation of a moment." Frome tries to defend Falder on humanitarian grounds. He says that it is Falder's first offence. It was committed in a moment of impulse. The background of the offence was also emotional and passionate love of a young heart for a woman who was in severe difficulty. It was an offence committed in a psychological state of mind in which most others would also behave the same way. So Falder should be treated as a patient rather than as a criminal. All the mitigating circumstances, age, temptation, weakness of character, momentary loss of mental balance should be taken into consideration to ensure the ideal kind of justice. The chariot-wheel of Justice has a sinister force of its own which crushes and powders the unwary victim, who happens to get into the cage of the law.

The prosecuting counsel is a matured lawyer. He makes a clean sweep of extra-judicial sentimentalism by proving from the very mouths



of the witnesses that Falder was not insane at the time of forging the cheque. He points out to the Jury that forgery is a serious crime and Falder behaved in a manner which might let suspicion fall on an innocent fellow-clerk, and Falder did all this to indulge in immoral relations with a married woman. Indeed, Galsworthy holds the balance so evenly poised between the opposite views. One view of the Law is that adopted by Frome who says that justice is a chariot-wheel, a cage. The other view is that which is held up by the Judge and Cleaver. According to them, Justice is a beautiful edifice which provides shelter to all. Galsworthy presents both the views objectively ; yet indirectly he has sympathy with Frome's view.

The manner and style of the two speeches make an interesting contrast. Frome is a young novice, idealistic and imaginative. The very nature of the offence, which is already admitted, makes his plea an eloquent appeal to the sentiment and emotions of the Jury, and, if possible, of the judge too. So his style is richly ornamented, a bit rhetorical and passionate. Smooth eloquence and personal appeal are the main characteristics of his speech. He knows his is a special pleading which can have some success only if it is neatly and passionately delivered. On the other hand, Cleaver's address is much briefer, because he has no need to beat about the bush. The evidences are in his favour ; he feels that the Judge too cannot but think as he himself thinks. This gives him a self-assurance which makes his speech calm in its mood but trenchant in its tone. It is divested of all ornaments, it is simple and direct, only made pungent by a mild sarcasm or two. The logic of the argument is his chief care. He has not the beggarly need to play to the emotions and feelings of the Jury.

**Q. 53.** Summarize the evidence and cross-examination of Cokeson in the trial scene of "Justice". What traits of his character are revealed in the process ?

**Ans.** The defence counsel, Frome, seeks to establish from the mouths of his witnesses the fact that on the morning of the 7th July when his client (Falder) forged the cheque, his state of mind was not normal. He first calls Cokeson. He asks him certain questions. Through Cokeson's answers we come to know that Cokeson is the managing clerk of the firm of the Solicitors run by James How and Walter How. Falder worked there for about two years. His conduct and character were found to be satisfactory and pleasing—In the morning of the 7th July he found Falder quite 'compose', that is sane. Cokeson explains that he means 'funny' by the term 'compose'. He also calls this state 'jumpy'. He saw Falder walking up and down and told him that it was not the zoological gardens. Falder answered rather arrogantly. His collar was unbuttoned, and when he drew Falder's attention to that, Falder buttoned it. Then on the 18th a woman came to the office and wanted to see Falder. She had her children with her ; but he did not know her. He tells Mr. Frome that the woman had told him that she had come to see Falder on a matter of life and death. Falder came in and she saw him. Then the woman went away.



Then the counsel for the crown asks him what he means by 'jumpy' and 'funny' state of Falder. He acknowledges that Falder was not mad that morning, but his eyes were funny. He further tells him that on his direction Falder buttoned his collar.

The evidence and cross-examination of Cokeson are full of subtle touches of unconscious humour which amuses Cokeson's childish vanity, his self-importance as managing clerk of the lawyers' firm, his obtuseness and intractableness are reflected in his behaviour. The Judge gets irritated, he also vexes the defence counsel. The prosecution counsel gives him sharp rebukes. Cokeson is puzzled to think why such a wise, legal minded, experienced clerk of a law office should not be understood. He amuses us by being foolishly over-exact in his evidence. His reverence for the law and law-court makes him amusingly scrupulous in his evidence. Again, he shows his knowledge of the law by mispronouncing *sine qua non*, which he had learnt from his master, James. He goes so far as to try to mislead Frome to put to him a 'leading question' just to have the credit of defeating the lawyer of his own side.

**Q. 54.** Summarize the evidence and cross-examination of Ruth in the trial. What light do these throw on her character ?

**Ans.** Ruth Honeywill in her evidence says that she is a married woman of twenty-six with two children, but she has not been living with her husband since July. She knows the accused, Falder. They are friends. The Judge wants to know the true nature of their relationship. She calmly says that they are lovers. Her husband is a canvasser and has been ill-treating her since the first child was born. The young man Falder offered to save her out of the clutches of her cruel husband, but his arrest made their plans futile. On July 7, her husband almost strangled her. She managed to escape and went to see Falder. She told him what had happened and her misery upset Falder. He never told her about a cheque but gave her some money on 8th July. She was surprised to see that Falder had money to give her to buy things in preparation for the journey. Falder told her that it was a windfall. She met him between 8th and 18th, he appeared to be dumb ; he behaved as if a fate hung over him. She loved him very much and he too loved her well. So greatly did he love her that her danger and unhappiness might well affect his mental balance. He was really very much disturbed on the morning of the 7th of July. On being questioned and cross-examined by Cleaver, she tells him that Falder, however, was not out of his mind. To the question of the Judge she frankly replies that she still loves Falder and glorifies in her love.

The statements of Ruth in the course of her evidence and cross-examination are such as raise her high in our estimate. She deals with plain, fearless truth ; she is straight and clear in her answers. She is bold in her confession of love. Far from being ashamed of her attempted elopement, she speaks of it as a necessary thing to do and there



was no moral wrong in it. To the judge her answers are reverent but fearless ; she hides nothing, softens no hard fact ; she stands up in silent defiance of the petty, narrow code of social morality which throttling down a helpless woman to a brutal husband is not ashamed to brand that woman as faithless or immoral when she tries to effect her escape by her own efforts. The Judge takes sides with her brutal husband and suspects her moral cleanliness. But to us she seems by her calm forbearance and unperturbed answers to stand head and shoulders above the conservative defender of social morality.

(Also see Chapter 6).

**Q. 55.** Give the substance of the Judge's summing up of the case to the Jury. Do you think that the Judge does it with clean impartiality ?

**Ans.** After the defence counsel and the prosecution counsel finish their arguments to the Jury, the Judge sums up the facts of the case as brought out by the evidence of the witnesses and cross examinations by the two lawyers. The Jury are to return their verdict on the facts presented before them by the Judge. He asks the Jury to keep in mind the fact that there is no dispute about the alteration of the cheque and the counterfoil of the cheque by the accused. The Jury are to pass their verdict on the defence plea of temporary insanity of the accused when he committed the crime. The Jury are to decide if in their opinion the accused appeared to be really insane. They should pass a verdict either of 'guilty', or 'guilty but insane'. The accused has admitted altering the counterfoil and the cheque. The Jury need not take into consideration the question of age, youth, and all that. They should consider whether or not the accused at the moment of the commission of the act of forgery was fit to be sent to a lunatic asylum.

It is clear from the manner of the directions given to the Jury by the Judge in summing up the facts of the case that he is not favourably disposed to the culprit. His speech gives sufficient indication of his own opinion of the case. That opinion had been already sufficiently clear to the Jury from the Judge's questions and comments in the course of the evidence. He seems to lay much more emphasis than necessary on pointing out what constitutes insanity, and finishes with a rather unwanted remark that to be insane at the moment of forgery the culprit must have been in a condition to be sent to a lunatic asylum. But an old, experienced and astute judge as he is, he says nothing in his summing-up which might make his directions legally 'perverse'. But morality is always superior to formal legality, the Judge cannot be said to be quite fair to the criminal, because by the trend of his speech and emphasis on points relevant to the purposes of conviction, he sufficiently indicates his own inclination.





## A CHRONOLOGY OF IMPORTANT EVENTS IN GALSWORTHY'S LIFE

- 1867 John Galsworthy was born on the 14th of August.  
1876 He was sent to a school at Bournemouth.  
1881 Joined the Harrow Public School.  
1886 Joined New College, Oxford University.  
1889 Took an honours degree in law.  
1890 Was called to the bar.  
1891-93 Went on a trip round the world.  
1893 Met Conard and formed a life-long friendship.  
1895 Began his career as a writer.  
1897 The first volume of his stories entitled *From the Four Winds* appeared under the pseudonym 'John Sinjohn'.  
1899 His first novel, *Jocelyn*, published.  
1900 *Villa Rubein* published.  
1901 *A Man of Devon, A Knight, The Science and Salvation of a Forsyte* published.  
1904 *The Island Pharisees* was published under the name of the author. The pseudonym was dropped. His father died. He married Ada.  
1906 *The Man of Property* published. His first play, *The Silver Box* published.  
1907 *Joy*, a comedy, published.  
1908 *A Commentary*, a collection of sketches published.  
1909 His second play, *Strife*, published. *Fraternity*, a novel appeared.  
1910 His third play, *Justice*, published. *A Motley*, sketches and short stories, appeared.  
1911-12 *Moods, Songs and Doggerels*, a volume of poems, *The Little Dream* and *The Pigeon* published. *The Eldest Son*, a comedy published.  
1913 *The Dark Flower*, a novel, published.  
1914 *The Mob* published. The Great war broke out.  
1915 *Freelands*, a novel, published.



- 1916 Galsworthy and his wife worked in a hospital in France for some months.
- 1917 The novel, *Beyond*, the comedy, *The Foundations* and the short story, *Indian Summer of a Forsyte*, published.
- 1918 *The Five Tales* appeared. He declined a knighthood.
- 1919 *The Saints' Progress* appeared.
- 1920 The story of the Foryste family was continued in *In Chancery*. *The Skin Game*, a play, published.
- 1921 The novels *Awakening* and *To Let* appeared. *A Family Man*, a play, published, Galsworthy was elected the first President of the London section of the P E.N. Club, an international body of Poets, Playwrights, Essayists and Novelists.
- 1922 *The Forsyte Saga* collecting the stories of the Forsyte Family, was published. Two plays, *Loyalties* and *Windows* published.
- 1924 *Old English*, a character comedy performed. *The White Monkey* published. He was elected President of the English Association.
- 1925 *The Silver Spoon* and *The Show* published.
- 1926 *Verses Old and New* published. He became an Honorary fellow of New College Oxford also a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. *Escape* written in California.
- 1927 *A Silent Wooing* and *Passers By* appeared.
- 1928 *Swan Song*, the crowning volume of the Forsyte Chronicles appeared.
- 1929 The Order of Merit conferred on him.
- 1930 *On Forsyte Change* published. Litt. D. conferred on him by Cambridge and Sheffield Universities.
- 1931 He was appointed Romanes Lecturer at Oxford. Oxford University and Princeton University conferred Honorary Doctorates on him.
- 1932 Nobel Prize for Literature awarded.
- 1933 He died on the 31st of January.



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## ‘जस्टिस’ का हिन्दी सारांश

### प्रथम अंक

जुलाई की एक सुबह, जैम्स एण्डवाल्टर हाऊ के दफ्तर में मैनेजिंग क्लर्क का कमरा। अब पर्दा उठता है तो हम साठ वर्षीय मैनेजिंग क्लर्क, राबर्ट कोकसन, को चश्मा चढ़ाये हिसाब-किताब में व्यस्त पाते हैं। उसी समय आफिस बॉय, स्वीडिल, उसे सूचित करता है कि हनीविल नामक एक महिला उसी आफिस के जूनियर क्लर्क, विलियम फाल्डर, से मिलना चाहती है। रथ हनीविल कोकसन को बताती है कि वह एक व्यक्तिगत कार्यवश फाल्डर से मिलना चाहती है कोकसन इस बात पर कुछ आपत्ति व्यक्त करता है, पर रथ कहती है कि उसका मिलना बहुत आवश्यक है, क्योंकि यह उसकी जिन्दगी और मौत का सवाल है।

उसी समय फाल्डर आ पहुँचता है। कोकसन एक मिनट मुहलत देकर बाहर चला जाता है। रथ फाल्डर को बताती है कि वह (रथ का पति) फिर बहुत पीने लगा है और उसने कल रात को उसका गला घोटने का भी प्रयत्न किया और इसीलिए वह इसके पूर्व कि वह जाग पाता, बच्चों को लेकर घर से भाग आयी है। फाल्डर कहता है कि उसने टिकट खरीद लिये हैं और वे दोनों उसी रात ग्यारह बजकर पैंतालीस मिनट पर स्टेशन पर पुनः मिलेंगे। फाल्डर इस बात को भी दोहराता है कि अब उन दोनों के आपसी सम्बन्ध पति-पत्नी के हैं; और तब रथ फाल्डर को उसका चुम्बन लेने का निमन्त्रण देती है। फाल्डर उसे आलिङ्गन में कस लेता है।

पर उसी बीच कोकसन आ पहुँचता है। वह उन्हें इस स्थिति में देख लेता है। दोनों अलग हो जाते हैं। रथ चली जाती है, तब कोकसन इस बात को उस स्थान पर करने के लिए अनुचित बतलाता है और फाल्डर को ‘प्योरिटी इनटू होम’ नामक पुस्तिका पढ़ने को देता है। फाल्डर अपने कमरे में चला जाता है।

उसी समय वाल्टर हाऊ प्रविष्ट होता है। कोकसन और वाल्टर में बोल्टर केस के बारे में बातचीत होती है; तभी वाल्टर के पिता, जेम्स हाऊ, आ पहुँचते हैं। वे छोटे कद के सफेद बाल वाले पर तीखी निगाह के व्यक्ति हैं। बाप-बेटे में विजनेस सम्बन्धी बातचीत होती है। अन्य कागजात के साथ-साथ जेम्स चैक-बुक का भी अवलोकन करते हैं। उसी दौरान उनकी निगाह एक नब्बे पौड के चैक पर पड़ जाती



है। वे उसके बारे में वाल्टर से पूछते हैं। वाल्टर कहता है कि उसने ऐसा कोई चैक नहीं भुनाया। हाँ नौ पौण्ड का एक चैक अवश्य कौश कराया था। दोनों ही चक्कर में पड़ जाते हैं।

तभी कोकसन फाल्डर के कमरे से वापस आ जाता है। उससे पूछा जाता है। वह भी कहता है कि चैक नौ ही पौण्ड का था और उसे भुनाने के लिए एक अन्य क्लर्क डेविस को दिया था। इस पर जेम्स कहता है कि डेविस तो सोमवार के दिन आस्ट्रेलिया के लिए रवाना हो चुका है। आखिर यह साजिश की तो की किसने? हो सकता है कोई गलती हुई हो। अतः बैंक के कैशियर काउले को बुलाया जाता है।

काउले कोकसन को बतलाता है कि उसे अच्छी तरह याद है कि चैक भुनाने वाला एक युवक ही था। उसी समय कुछ कागजात लिये हुए फाल्डर कमरे में आता है। काउले को देखकर फाल्डर आतंकित हो जाता है। इस समय उसकी आँखें उसकी मानसिक स्थिति की गवाह हैं। वह बहुत घबड़ा जाता है। कागजात देकर वह वापस चला जाता है। काउले संकेत करता है कि यही वह व्यक्ति है। काउले यह कहकर कि उसे चाहे जब फिर बुला सकते हैं, चला जाता है।

जब फाल्डर लंच के लिए बाहर जाने लगता है, जेम्स उसे रोक देता है। फिर उस चैक के सम्बन्ध में फाल्डर से छानबीन की जाती है। वह स्वीकार करता है कि पिछले सप्ताह शुक्रवार को उसने एक चैक, जो कि डेविस ने भुनाने को उसे दिया था, बैंक से कौश कराया था। जेम्स द्वारा यह पूछे जाने पर कि डेविस द्वारा दिया हुआ चैक नौ पौण्ड का था, वह कहता है नहीं, नब्बे का था। फिर उससे और बहुत से प्रश्न पूछे जाते हैं।

आखिरकार जब वह देख लेता है कि उसका बचकर निकलना नामुमकिन है, फाल्डर स्वीकार करता है कि यह निन्दनीय कार्य उसी का था। उसी ने एक शून्य बढ़ाकर नौ के नब्बे किये थे। वह स्वीकार करता है कि यह उसका क्षणिक पागलपन था। उसे खुद ही पता नहीं कि कैसे और क्यों वह ऐसा बुरा और बेईमानी का काम कर बैठा। फिर वह अपने किये पर अफसोस जाहिर करता है, माँफ़ी माँगता है और वह पूरा रुपया वापस करने का वायदा करता है। जेम्स के आदेश पर फाल्डर अपने कमरे में वापस चला जाता है।

अब इस विषय पर जेम्स, कोकसन और वाल्टर आपस में बातचीत करते हैं कि आखिर इस गलती के लिए अपराधी को क्या सजा दी जावे। जेम्स का मत है कि फाल्डर ने कानून तोड़ा है, अतः उसे सजा मिलनी चाहिए। वाल्टर कुछ दया दिखाना चाहता है यह सोचकर कि यह उसका पहला जुर्म है। कोकसन संकेत करता है कि हो सकता है कि किसी बाह्य प्रलोभन-वश फाल्डर ऐसा करने को मजबूर हुआ हो। इसी सन्दर्भ में वह सबेरे आने वाली औरत की बात खोलता है। जेम्स अब तो



फाल्डर को एक बिल्कुल गिरा हुआ मनुष्य करार दे देता है। कोकसन वैसे तो युवक के प्रति सहानुभूतिपूर्ण है पर वह जेम्स का विरोध करने से डरता है। वाल्टर क्षमा के पक्ष में है और चाहता है कि उसे एक मौका दे दिया जावे।

तभी स्काटलैण्ड यार्ड से विस्टर नामक डिटेक्टिव आ पहुँचता है। फाल्डर को पुनः बुलवाया जाता है। विस्टर फाल्डर की बाँह कसकर पकड़ लेता है और उससे अपने साथ चलने को कहता है। जेम्स फाल्डर पर साजिश, गबन का आरोप लगाता है। फाल्डर की हालत खराब है। वह पीला पड़ गया है, सम्भवतः वह रथ के बारे में अब भी सोच रहा है। वह कहने को मजबूर होता है। “ओह! श्रीमान! एक कोई है—जिसकी खातिर मैंने ऐसा किया। मुझे यदि कल तक की मुहलत मिल जावे तो अच्छा हो।” पर वहाँ सुनने वाले कान कहाँ? दया और क्षमा के दायरे के बाहर फाल्डर कानून और न्याय के फौलादी शिकंजे में।

अब तो वह दया के दायरे और क्षमा की छाया के बाहर था। अब तो फाल्डर कानून और न्याय के फौलादी शिकंजे में था। कहीं कानून भी दयालु होता है?

### द्वितीय अंक

स्थान—न्यायालय, समय—अक्टूबर की एक उतरती दोपहरी, जज, ज्यूरी, वैरिस्टर्स, सोलिसिटर्स, रिपोर्टर्स, से अदालत का कमरा खचाखच भरा है। फाल्डर के मुकदमे की सुनवाई चल रही है। सरकारी वकील हैं श्री हैरोल्ड क्लीवर—उतरती उमर के रूखे-सूखे व्यक्ति। अभियुक्त के वकील हैं हैक्टर फ्रोम—उँचे कद के, क्लीन-शेव्ड युवक; वे सफेद ‘विग’ पहने हुए हैं। जब पर्दा उठता है तो हम पाते हैं कि क्लीवर साहब सरकारी पक्ष का सबूत पेश कर चुकने के बाद अपना स्थान ग्रहण कर रहे हैं।

अब, मुल्जिम के वकील, फ्रोम साहब, खड़े होकर जज साहब के सामने झुककर इज्जत बख्शते हुए सफाई पेश करते हैं। वे कहते हैं कि इस बाबत तो दो राय नहीं हो सकती कि कैदी ने चैक में हेराफेरी की है। लेकिन जो बात खास तौर से ध्यान देने योग्य है, वह यह है कि जिस दौरान में मुल्जिम ने जुर्म किया उस वक्त उसके दिमाग की हालत ठीक नहीं थी; और इसीलिए उसको उस काम के लिए जिम्मेवार नहीं ठहराया जा सकता। उस वक्त, हकीकत तो यह है हजूर! मुल्जिम एक थोड़े समय के दिमागी फिन्न की हालत से गुजर रहा था। उस वक्त वह, वह नहीं था। उसका दिमाग जैसे कि एक ऐसे बोझ को ढो रहा था जो उस जैसे कमजोर-दिल आदमी के लिए बहुत ज्यादा था।

कैदी की उम्र अभी कुल तेईस साल है। अभी मैं बयानों के लिए एक महिला को पेश करूँगा जो कि आपको बतलायेगी कि वे क्या हालात थे जिन्होंने इस गरीब को ऐसा करने के लिए मजबूर किया। अगर सच पूछा जाये तो यह औरत एक ऐसी



मुसीबतों में फँसी औरत है जिसने अपनी इस थोड़ी-सी जिन्दगी में बहुत बुरे दिन देख लिये हैं। शादी-शुदा है जरूर पर इसका शौहर शराबी होने के साथ ही साथ, इसके साथ बेजा व नाकाबिले बर्दाश्त जानवराना सलूक करता है। किसी तरह यह नौजवान इस गरीब की कहानी सुनकर इम पर तरस खा गया और उसे नरक से बाहर निकालने को तैयार हो गया। बस इसी कोशिश में पैसे की सख्त जरूरत होने की वजह से, यह वह काम कर बैठा जो सरासर जुर्म है—इस बात से इन्कार नहीं किया जा सकता।

तभी जज महोदय वकील साहब को बीच में टोकते हुए कहते हैं कि इन सब बातों का फाल्डर के जुर्म से कोई सीधा ताल्लुक नहीं है। पर वकील साहब अदालत को भरोसा दिलाते हैं कि वे साबित करेंगे कि इस सब का फाल्डर के केस से कितना नजदीकी ताल्लुक है, और वे फिर उस औरत की कहानी अपनी जबानी कहना शुरू कर देते हैं।

आखिर ऐसी हालत में हाजरीन इस औरत के सामने रास्ता ही क्या था? यही न कि वह या तो उस पियक्कड़ के साथ अपनी जिन्दगी काटती रहे और इस तरह हमेशा अपनी जान के लिए डरती रहे; या फिर तलाक के लिए कचहरी में दरखास्त देवे। थोड़ी देर के लिए मान लीजिए उसे और छुट्टी मिल जाती पर आखिर उस बेचारी के पास अपना और अपनी औलाद का पेट पालने के लिए क्या जरिया था? यही न कि वह 'पुअर ला' का सहारा लेती, या फिर अपनी असमत-फरोशी का धन्धा मजबूरन अपनाती।

आप घबड़ाइये नहीं, जज साहब ! बात पते की है। और इसी दौरान इस औरत का इस कैदी से मेल-जोल हुआ। उसने अपना दुखड़ा नौजवान को सुनाया। कैदी पिघल गया। जी जान से, पैसे से, उसकी मदद करने को आमादा हो गया। उन्होंने तय किया कि वे दोनों किसी दूसरे मुल्क को भाग चले क्योंकि यहाँ रहने पर दोनों को ही न जाने इस समाज के कितने ताने सुनने और सहने पड़ते।

लेकिन हज़ूर ! इस सबका यह मतलब बिल्कुल नहीं कि एक गलती किसी कदर दूसरी गलती को कम कर सकती है। पर यह बात सच है कि कैदी इस औरत की जिन्दगी में उसका मसीहा बनकर आया था और यही समझकर उसने अपने आपको उसके भरोसे पर छोड़ दिया था और वह फिर कुछ चैन की साँस लेने लगी थी। इन हालातों में इस औरत की जान व नौजवान की कोशिश बेजा नहीं कही जा सकती। उनमें रगवत पैदा हो गयी लिहाजा भाग चलने की बात तय हुई। पर पैसा आये तो कहाँ से? और बाइज्जत कैसे भागा जाय? जहाँ तक 7 जुलाई के वाक्यात का ताल्लुक है—यानी कि वह दिन जिस दिन चैक पर नौ के नब्बे बनाये गये थे—उनसे यह साफ जाहिर है कि मुलजिम को इन हालातों में उसके जुर्म के लिए जिम्मेवार



नहीं ठहराया जा सकता, क्योंकि उसका कोई ऐसा इरादा नहीं था; और इस बात की पुष्टि होती है राबर्ट कोकसन के वयान से जो उसी आफिस का मैनेजिंग क्लर्क है, जिसमें कि फाल्डर काम करता था।

राबर्ट कोकसन फ्रोम साहब के सवाल करने पर अदालत को बतलाता है कि मैं फाल्डर को पिछले दो साल से जानता रहा हूँ। वह एक नेकचलन व खुश-मिजाज आदमी रहा है। इससे पहले कभी भी ऐसा मौका पैदा नहीं हुआ जब उस पर बेईमानी का शक तक किया गया हो। लेकिन 7 जुलाई की सुबह जब वह दफ्तर आया तब वह काफी अनमना था, उसे अपनी पोशाक की भी सुधबुध नहीं थी, कुछ उखड़ा-उखड़ा-सा, खोया-खोया सा नजर आता था।

जब आफिस में जाकर मैंने डेविस को भुनाने के लिए चैंक दिया था, फाल्डर इधर से उधर और उधर से इधर अपने में खोया-सा गुमसुम घूम रहा था। मुझे याद है कि मैंने मजाक में कहा था 'मिस्टर फाल्डर ! यह कोई अजयबघर है क्या ?' और उसका बड़ी मायूसी में दिया हुआ जवाब था, 'काश ! कि यह ऐसा ही होता।' मुझे यह सब बड़ा अजीब लगा, हाँ उस समय उसके कौलर का बटन भी खुला था, वह बड़ा विचित्र नजर आ रहा था।

आगे फ्रोम साहब कोकसन से पूछते हैं कि क्या वह बता सकता है कि उस दिन यानी 18 जुलाई को जब वह जालसाजी पकड़ी गयी थी क्या कोई खास बात हुई थी। कोकसन बतलाता है कि एक औरत दफ्तर में आयी थी। तभी जज महोदय फिर टोकते हैं कि आखिर इस सबका इस मुकद्दे से क्या ताल्लुक। और तब वकील साहब फिर विश्वास दिलाते हैं कि इसका बहुत गहरा ताल्लुक है। और तब कोकसन पहले अंक वाली सब घटना लगभग जैसी की तैसी सुनाता है और कहता है कि फाल्डर से मिलने की खास जरूरत बतलाते हुए उस औरत ने कहा था यह उसकी जिन्दगी और मौत का सवाल है।

फिर सरकारी वकील कोकसन से जिरह करता है कि आखिर 'उखड़ा-उखड़ा और 'अनमना-सा' से उसका क्या मकसद है। कोकसन बात की सफाई में कहता है कि 'उस वक्त फाल्डर की बेवसी तथा मायूसी की हालत कुछ वैसी ही थी जैसी कि उस कुत्ते की होती है जिसने अपना मालिक खो दिया हो।'।

फिर रथ हनीविल को गवाही के लिए पेश किया जाता है। अपना नाम, पता, उम्र बताने के बाद रथ कहती है—हम दोनों एक-दूसरे के दोस्त थे—प्रेमी थे, एक-दूसरे के लिए दोनों के दिलों में गुँजाइश थी और अब भी है। मेरी जिन्दगी शादी के बाद बहुत ही मुसीबतजदा रही है। मेरे शराबी पति ने वह सब किया जो कहने की बात नहीं है और इसी बीच मेरा मिलाप फाल्डर से हुआ। नौजवान को मेरी हालत पर तरस आया, और इस तरह से निकलकर साउथ अमरीका भाग चलने का निश्चय किया। दोनों ने जो भी Preservation जिस दिन का, उन्ही के दौरे किया गया



मेरा दिल टूक-टूक हो गया। मैं अपने से ज्यादा उसके लिए गमगीन हो उठी। 7 जुलाई का दिन ही वह मनहूस दिन था जिस दिन सुबह मेरे शौहर ने मुझे अधमरा करके छोड़ा था, और मैं घबड़ाई हुई सबेरे ही भागकर फाल्डर के पास आई थी और सब कुछ कह सुनाया था। फाल्डर यह सब सुनकर सन्न रह गया था, घबड़ा गया था, वह हमदर्दी में पिघल उठा था। अब सोचती हूँ, काश ! यह सब उससे न कहा होता।

8 जुलाई को, रथ कहती है, फाल्डर ने मुझे कुछ पैसे भी दिये थे—अपने व बाल-बच्चों के कपड़े खरीदने के लिए—उसने बाद में मुझसे कहा भी था कि वह किसी चक्कर में पड़ जायेगा। उससे मेरी आखिरी मुलाकात उसकी गिरफ्तारी के दिन हुई थी। इस बीच वह काफी उदास और बहुत फिक्रमन्द रहा था। वह मेरी बरबादी, मेरे खतरे और मेरी परेशानियों से परेशान रहने लगा था। उसका दिमाग इसी सब में घूमता नजर आता था। बहुत कम बोलता—गूँगा सा रहने लगा था, आखिर उसे मुझसे हमदर्दी थी, लगाव था, मुहब्बत थी, और हाथ ! उसने मेरी खातिर अपने को मिटा दिया। काश ! मैं उसे न मिली होती।

क्लीवर साहब रथ से एक-दो सवाल और करते हैं ; और फिर मुलजिम अपने बयानात के लिए हाजिर होता है। फाल्डर कहता है—मेरी उम्र तेईस साल है, अभी अविवाहित ही हूँ, मैं यह भी जानता हूँ कि यह औरत शादीशुदा है और एक पियक्कड़ जानवर के साथ मुसीबत-जदा जिन्दगी बसर करती रही है। जब वह 7 जुलाई के सुबह मेरे घर मुझसे मिलने आई थी उसकी पोशाक मैली-कुचैली व फटी हुई थी, उसके गले पर उँगलियों के निशान थे, बाँहों में चोट के निशान उभरे थे, आँखें सुर्ख हो रही थीं और उसे सांस लेना भी दुश्वार हो रहा था। उसे इस हालत में देखकर मैं ठगा सा रह गया। मैं उसके लिए कुछ कर-मर जाने के लिए सोचने लगा। आखिर एक गरीब एक दूसरे गरीब की मदद कैसे करे, यही उलझन थी। जब वह चली गयी तब भी मैं बराबर सोचता रहा कि कहीं उसका पति फिर उसके साथ वैसा ही सलूक न करे। बेचारी औरत ! उसके मासूम बच्चे। क्या होगा उसका भला इस दुनिया में, उसकी सुनने वाला और कौन है ?

और इन्हीं ख्यालातों में डूबता-उतराता मैं आफिस पहुँचा—जाना तो था ही। तभी डेविस ने चैंक भुनाने को मेरे हाथ में दिया। बिजली की तरह दिमाग में आया। “नौ से नब्बे” ! कितना आसान ! बस एक जीरो और। बेड़ा पार ! रथ की जान बचा लूँगा, फिर क्या था आँख झपकते न झपकते नाइन’ में टी-वाई’ जाँड़ी और नौ के आगे एक ‘जीरो’ बढ़ाया और सीधा बैंक जा पहुँचा। नोट हाथ में लेकर जब मैं बैंक से निकला तब कुछ समझ में आया कि मैं क्या कर बैठा था, एक बार सोचा, क्यों न किसी मोटर बस के नीचे दब कर जान दे दूँ। पर एक आवाज भीतर से आई। कायर ! डरपोक ! जब उस औरत के लिए इतना किया तो अब डरना क्या ? जो है, उसे बचा लूँगा।



मंजूर हुआ तो यह कर्ज भी चुका दूँगा। पर बार-बार दिमाग में आता रहा—यह काम गलत है, जुर्म है, पाप है। पर भला जो हो चुका था उसे अब अनहूआ कैसे किया जा सकता था। होनी अमिट है।

कबीर के सवाल करने पर फाल्डर बतलाता है—मुझे बिल्कुल याद नहीं कि मैंने चैक में हेरा-फेरी की। मैं तो उस समय पागल सा था। बस जो कुछ हुआ एक इलेक्ट्रिक शॉट की तरह अचानक, अनसोचा, अनजाना। बस एक क्षणिक आवेश। पर बाद में दिमाग ठण्डा पड़ने पर मैंने सोचा था कि साउथ अमरीका पहुँचने पर मैं सब कुछ अपने मालिक को लिख भेजूँगा और रकम भी वापस भेज दूँगा। अगर मैं उस समय बुरी तरह धबड़ाया हुआ न होता तो ऐसा बेजा काम करने की हिम्मत कभी भी नहीं करता।

मुलजिम की सफाई खत्म करते हुए फोम साहब खड़े हुए और अदालत की तरफ मुखातिब होकर उन्होंने कहा—

हुजूर, हमारे काबिल दोस्त ने अपनी जिरह में मुलजिम की शहादत का मजाक बनाने की कोशिश में कोई कसर नहीं उठा रखी है, मैं इस बात से इन्कार नहीं करता कि जो कुछ भी अब मैं कहूँगा वह आपको अपीत नहीं करेगा। अगर अभी पेश की गई सफाई ने आपको यह इतमीनान नहीं दिलाया है कि कैदी ने जिन क्षणों में यह सब किया उस दौरान में उसका न तो कोई ऐसा इरादा ही था और न मनसूबा और इसीलिए वह इसके लिए जिम्मेदार नहीं ठहराया जा सकता। हकीकत तो यह है, हाजरीन, कि वे चन्द लमहे उसके लिए दिमागी व ईमानी भावीपन के थे, और इस हालत को पैदा करने में उसके उस जजवाती जलजले का हाथ था जो उसके दिमागी फितूर का शिकार हो बैठा था।

मेरे दोस्त ने तो यहाँ तक कह डाला कि मैंने इन सब मामलों की एक रूमानी रंग में रंगने की बेजा कोशिश की है। हकीकत यह है हाजरीन, कि मैंने ऐसा कुछ भी नहीं किया है। मैंने तो सिर्फ उन अनसुनी धड़कनों और अनकही अड़चनों को जुवां दी है जो मुलजिम व रूथ से तमाम दूसरे इन्सानों की जिन्दगी की बैक-ग्राउन्ड बनाती है, जो कि हमेशा हर जुर्म के किये जाने के पीछे ज्यादातर हालत में पोशीदा रहती है। हमें इस बात का धमण्ड है कि हम एक तहजीबयापता जमाने के लोग हैं, और इसीलिए हम जानवरियत और जोर-जबरदस्ती व ज्यादाती को कभी भी बरदास्त नहीं कर सकते, और वह भी फिर एक औरत के साथ।

जरा सोचिये हाजरीन, आप भी कभी कैदी की उम्र के रहे होंगे। इस उम्र में जजवातों का जोर मारना बिल्कुल कुदरती है, और वह भी उस हालत में जबकि इस नौजवान को उस औरत से बेहद हमदर्दी रही है। जवान कैदी की हुलिया अपने आपसे इस बात की पुष्टि होती है कि वह संयमित नहीं है, बल्कि वह जजवात का



शिकार बड़ी आसानी से हो सकता है। उस समय उसकी हालत उसके दिलोदिमाग को झकझोर देने वाली थी। वह एक थोड़े समय के पागलपन की झोंक थी, जिससे चन्द लमहों के लिए दिमागी, गैर जिम्मेदारी की हालत पैदा हो गयी थी। वह अच्छे और बुरे का फर्क खो बैठा था और जिस तरह से ऐसी हालत में एक आदमी को खुदकशी या ऐसे ही किसी संगीन जुर्म के लिए जिम्मेवार नहीं ठहराया जाता, यह कैदी भी जुर्म का इरादा न होने के कारण बरी किया जा सकता है। उसे एक दिमागी मरीज करार दिया जा सकता है। शक का फायदा तो कत्ल के जुर्म तक में दिया जाता है।

काविले गौर है हाजरीन, फाल्डर का जवाब कि 'वह उन' चार मिनटों में क्या सोच रहा था। वह मिस्टर कोकसन के चेहरे के बारे में सोच रहा था। कितना अजीब ! कैसा पागलपन भरा यह सब था। यह है उसके दिमाग की गैर-मामूली हालत का नमूना। सब कुछ एक झोंक में हो गया। हाजरीन, मुझ पर यकीन किया जाय जब मैं यह कहता हूँ कि इन्सान की जिन्दगी में सबसे बढ़कर और कोई ट्रेजेडी मुश्किल से ही होगी कि वह जो कुछ एक बार कर डालता है उसका पलट पाना उसके लिए नामुमकिन हो जाता है। जब एक बार 'नौ' के 'नव्वे' हो चुके, चैक भुनाया जा चुका—जो कि कुल चार पागल मिनटों का खेल था, फिर भला चुप्पी के सिवा चारा ही क्या था ? लेकिन उन मनहूस चार मिनटों ने इस मासूम को कानून के कठघरे में कैद करवा दिया, और इसके बाद उसने जो कुछ भी किया कम-जोर करैक्टर को साबित करने के लिए बहुत काफी है ; और यही उसकी बदकिस्मती का कारण है।

लेकिन सवाल है कि क्या सिर्फ इसीलिए एक ऐसे आदमी को जिसे विरासत में एक कमजोर व्यक्तित्व मिला है, जमाने के हाथों लुट-पिट जंते दिया जावे। हाजरीन, गुस्ताखी माफ हो, न जाने इस कैदी-सी कठिनाई वाले कितने लोग हमारे कानून की दराँती के नीचे रोजाना पिसते रहते हैं, क्योंकि हमारा कानून इन्सानियत की उस पैनी निगाह से अछूता रह जाता है जो कि उन्हें वैसा देखकर जैसे कि वे हैं—यानी एक तरह के मरीज, भुजरिम नहीं, देखती हैं, और इसीलिए अगर कैदी को मुजरिम करार दिया जाता है तो, जैसा कि तजुर्बा बतलाता है, वह जरूर ही एक पक्का मुजरिम बन जावेगा। इसलिए मैं प्रार्थना करता हूँ कि ऐसा इन्साफ न किया जावे जिससे कि कैदी फिर वापस जेल में भेज दिया जावे और हमेशा के लिए एक मुजरिम एक जाल-साज करार दे दिया जावे।

इन्साफ एक ऐसी मशीन है हाजरीन, कि जब कोई उसे एक बार चला देता है तब वह अपने आप घूमती चली जाती है और उसके सामने जो कोई भी पड़ता है



उसी को पीसती-कुचलती चलती चली जाती है—क्या इस जवान का भी यही हथ होगा ? क्या वह भी इस मशीन के नीचे कुचल दिया जावेगा ? क्या उसे एक बार फिर से अपने-आपको एक भला और नेक इन्सान साबित करने का मौका नहीं दिया जा सकता ? इन्सानियत का तकाजा तो यही है कि इस नौजवान को रिहा कर दिया जावे ताकि मुजरिमों की पंक्ति में एक और न जुड़ने पावे ।

फ्रोम साहब ने आगे कहा—यदि फाल्डर को एक जुर्मी की तरह अब कैद रखा गया तो मैं दावे के साथ कह सकता हूँ कि वह फिर कभी भी पहले-सा वापस नहीं लौटेगा । उसका चेहरा इस बात की गवाही देता है कि ये सब वर्दाशत करना उसकी ताकत से बाहर है, और फिर जरा एक पलड़े पर उसके जुर्म को रखिये और दूसरे पर उसकी उस हालत को जिसमें होकर वह गुजर चुका है, आप पायेंगे कि दूसरी बात दस गुना ज्यादा भारी है । वह दो माह अभी जेल में ही गुजार चुका है, क्या वह उस सबको कभी भूल सकता है ? इस दौरान उसके दिमाग की परेशान हालत का अन्दाज लगाइये । न जाने कितने बार अपने किये पर उसने अपने आपको धिक्कारा होगा ! पछतावा किया होगा ! फिर ऐसा बुरा काम न करने की कसम खाई होगी ! सच तो यह है कि फाल्डर को अपने किये की काफी सजा मिल चुकी है । हकीकत तो यह है कि इन्साफ की गाड़ी के पहियों ने इसे कुचलना तभी शुरू कर दिया था जब यह तय किया गया कि इस पर मुकद्दमा चलाया जावे और सजा दी जावे । इस कानून की दूसरी सीढ़ी तक हम अभी ही पहुँच चुके हैं । मैं तो यह नहीं देख सकता कि फाल्डर तीसरी सीढ़ी तक पहुँचने के लिए मजबूर कर दिया जावे ।

अब सरकारी वकील क्लीवर साहब खड़े होकर अपनी दलीलें सबूत में पेश करते हैं—टुजूर और हाजरीन, इस मुकद्दमे में वाकयात के वाक्य दो राये नहीं हैं; मुलजिम की शहादत इतनी कमजोर और छिछली है कि मैं इन सब बातों को दुहरा कर अदालत का कीमती समय जाया करना पसन्द नहीं करता । प्ली (plea) है थोड़े समय के पागलपन का । हाजरीन मुलजिम की तरफ की सफाई बहुत ही खोखली और वे सिर-पैर की है; यानी कि कैदी गुनहगार साबित होता है ।

मुलजिम के वकील ने सीधी रिहाई की दरखास्त की जगह एक टेढ़ा-मेढ़ा भूल-भुलझों वाला 'रास्ता' अपनाया है मुख्तसिर में मुलजिम के वकील ने इस मामले को रूमानी रंग देने की कोशिश की है । इसके लिए मेरे काबिल दोस्त बधाई के पात्र हैं, उनकी इस बिल्कुल नई सूझ-बूझ के लिए मैं उनकी तारीफ करता हूँ । उन्होंने जुर्म के इरादे और जुर्म करने के समय की दिमागी हालात की कहानी अदालत के सामने एक ऐसे ढंग में पेश की है जिसे, हकीकत में किसी और ढंग से पेश करना नामुमकिन होता, और हाजरीन, अगर आपने इस बात को समझ लिया तो समझिए कि उस कदम का सफाया



अब जरा मुलजिम के पागलपन की शहादत मुलाहजा फरमाइये। आपने इस औरत के बयानात सुने हैं। उसने कहा है कि जिस समय सवेरे इस नौजवान को उसने छोड़ा, कैदी दिमाग से दुरुस्त था। अगर उसका दिमाग काम करना बन्द कर रहा होता तो वही वह नाजुक समय था जब पागलपन के आसार नजर आने लगते। आपने मैंनेजिग क्लर्क का बयान भी सुना। उसने कहा है कि जिस समय चैक डेविस को सौंपा गया, कैदी कुछ बौखलाया हुआ था—पागल नहीं, यह बदकिस्मती जरूर है कि इस समय डेविस यहां नहीं है पर इससे क्या? कैदी को डेविस के अलफाज याद हैं जो उसने कैदी से चैक देते समय कहे थे। जाहिर है कि उस समय भी कैदी अपने होश-हवाश में दुरुस्त था। कैशियर के बयान भी इसी बात की ताईद करते हैं।

इसलिए यह बात नजर-अन्दाज नहीं की जा सकती कि एक आदमी जो एक बज कर दस मिनट पर सही-सलामत था और एक बजकर पन्द्रह मिनट पर भी अपने होश-हवाश में दुरुस्त था, सिर्फ इस जुर्म के नतायज से बचने के लिए ही इन बीच के समय में अपने आपको पागल कहता है। यह एक ऐसा प्वाइन्ट है जिस पर ज्यादा कहना फिजूल होगा। आप अपनी राय इस बाबत खुद बना सकते हैं। मेरे अजीज दोस्त ने कैदी की अधपकी उम्र और उम्र की कशिशों के बिना पर अपनी दलीलों को वजन देने की नाकामयाब कोशिश की है। लेकिन मेरा तो कहना यही है कि कैदी ने एक ऐसा जुर्म किया है जो हमारे कानून की निगाह में एक बहुत बड़ा जुर्म है, सरासर फरेब व जालसाजी का शक आने देता, और एक शादीशुदा औरत से इसके इतने नजदीकी ताल्लुकात। इस सूरत में हाजरीन, कैदी को मुजरिम करार दिया जावे और उसको इस जुर्म के लिए माकूल सजा का हुक्म जारी किया जावे। यही इन्साफ है।

अब जज साहब, ज्यूरी की तरफ थोड़ा सा मुड़कर कहना शुरू करते हैं— आपने सरकारी सबूत और मुलजिम की सफाई दोनों ही सुने। मेरा काम अब बस इतना है कि मैं उन बातों की तरफ आपकी तबज्जा खींचूँ जिनको नजर में रखते हुए आपको अपना फैसला देना है। जहाँ तक चैक और उसके काउण्टर-फाइल में हेरा-फेरी करने की बात है, मुलजिम ने इकबाल किया है। पर मुलजिम का कहना है कि जब उसने यह जुर्म किया उसकी हालत ऐसी नहीं थी कि उसे जिम्मेवार ठहराया जा सके। जहाँ तक थोड़ी देर पागलपन का सवाल है, आपने कैदी की कहानी सुनी है और दूसरे गवाहों के बयान भी। अब अगर इस बिना पर यह पाया जाता है कि इस जालसाजी के समय कैदी पागल-सा था तो आप इस नतीजे पर पहुँचेंगे कि वह मुजरिम तो है पर साथ ही पागल भी। और दूसरी जानिव अगर आपकी राय में कैदी दिमागी तौर से दुरुस्त पाया जाता है तो आप उसे मुजरिम मानेंगे।



और इसीलिए उस समय कैदी की हालत का सही तौर से अन्दाजा लगने के लिए हमें उस दौरान से पहले और धाद के मुलजिम के चाल, दाव व हरकतों पर खास ध्यान देना होगा। खास तौर से आपका ध्यान इस तरफ खींचा जाता है कि कैदी ने इकबाल किया है कि 'टी-वाई' और एक 'जीरो' जोड़ने की बात उमके दिमाग में उसी समय आयी जब उसे चैक सौंपा गया। फिर वाद में काउण्टर-फॉइल में भी तबदीली करना और साथ ही उसके बाद का उसका खड्डा इस बात का लगभग सबूत है कि उसने जो कुछ किया उसके बारे में पहले से सोच चुका था, जिसका मतलब होता है कैदी का दिमागी तौर से दुरुस्त होना। साथ ही अपना फैसला देते समय आपको मुलजिम की उम्र और कशिश वाली बात को कोई अहमियत नहीं देनी है। दूसरे, पहले कि आप इस नतीजे पर पहुँचें कि कैदी मुरिम तो है पर साथ ही साथ दिमागी मरीज भी, आपको इस बात का पूरा-पूरा यकीन कर लेना चाहिए कि उस समय उसके दिमाग की हालत दरअसल में ऐसी थी कि उसे पागलखाने भेजना ही मुनासिब होता।

तभी ऐसा अनुभव कर कि ज्यूरी विश्राम चाहते हैं, जज महोदय उन्हें जाने की अनुमति दे देते हैं और स्वयं कागजात पर झुक जाते हैं। इस बीच फ्रॉम साहब उठकर कहते हैं, हजूर, कैदी इस बात के लिए बहुत फिक्रमन्द है कि इस औरत का नाम इस मुकद्दमे में गवाही के रूप में न छपा जाये और इसलिए हजूर रिपोर्टों को इस औरत का नाम अखबार में न छापने की हिदायत कर दें तो बेहतर होगा। आप समझते ही हैं कि अगर उसका नाम अखबार में आ गया तो इस बेचारी की जिन्दगी में एक और खतरा खड़ा हो जायेगा।

जज महोदय कुछ तीखे ढंग से संदेह-मिश्रित मुस्कान के साथ कहते हैं— मिस्टर फ्रॉम, आपने तो जान-बूझकर ही यह रास्ता अपनाया है, जिससे इस औरत का अदालत में पेश किया जाना जरूरी हो गया। तब फ्रॉम साहब कुछ झुककर अर्ज करते हैं। हजूर ही सोचें कि क्या मैं किसी और ढंग से इस मामले के पूरे वाक्यात को सामने लाने में कामयाब हो सकता था ?

तब जज महोदय फाल्डर और रुथ पर एक निगाह दीड़ाने के बाद कहते हैं कि उनकी इस परियाद पर गौर किया जायेगा। तभी ज्यूरी वापस आ जाते हैं।

ज्यूरी अपनी राय में कैदी को 'मुजरिम' पर साथ ही 'पागल' न ठहराकर 'मुजरिम' ही ठहराते हैं। तब फ्रॉम साहब फिर खड़े होकर मुलजिम की उम्र देखते हुए व उसका इससे पहले का चालचलन नजर में रखते हुए, सजा में कुछ नमी प्रगट करने की परियाद करना चाहते हैं। तब जज साहब का इशारा पाकर, क्लर्क कैदी की तरफ मुखातिब होकर कहता है कि उस पर जालसाजी का इलजाम लगाया जाता है, और इस बाबत क्या वह और कुछ कहना चाहता है कि अदालत कानून के मुताबिक क्यों न अपना फैसला देवे। और उत्तर में फाल्डर केवल अपना सिर हिला देता है।



अब जज साहब सब बिखरे सूत्रों को इकट्ठा करते हुए, फाल्डर को सुखातिव करते हुए, कहते हैं—विलियम फाल्डर, तुम्हारे मुकद्दमे की पूरी सुनवाई हुई है और मेरी राय में भी जालसाजी के जुर्मों तुम ठीक ही पाये गये हो। तुम्हारी जानिब से अदालत को यह यकीन दिलाने की भरसक कोशिश की गयी है कि जुर्म के करते समय तुम अपने काम के लिये जिम्मेवार नहीं थे। पर असलियत यह है कि तुम्हारे वकील ने रहम की फरियाद की है कि तुम्हें दिमागी मरीज समझा जावे। और अपनी इस कोशिश में उन्होंने इन्साफ और कानून पर छींटाकशी करने में कोई कसर नहीं उठा रखी है, और इशारा किया है कि किस तरह जुर्म का दायरा धीरे-धीरे बढ़ता ही जाता है।

लेकिन इस बात पर सोचने से पहले मुझे कई बातों पर गौर करना होगा। प्रथम तो यह है कि तुम्हारा जुर्म काफी भारी है, तुमने सोच-समझकर काउण्टर-फॉइल पर तबदीली की और फिर तुमने एक बेगुनाह इन्सान पर जुर्म का शक आने का मौका दिया—जोकि एक बहुत ही संजीदा बात है। सबसे बाद में इस बात का भी पूरा ख्याल रखना है कि दूसरे तुम्हारी मिसाल से बचें।

दूसरी तरफ, मुझे यह भी ख्याल है कि तुम अभी जवान हो, कि अब तक तुम्हारा चाल-चलन ठीक रहा है, और अगर मैं तुम्हारे गवाहों के बयानों पर भरोसा करूँ—कि तुमने यह जुर्म जजवाती भड़क में एक थोड़ी देर के दिमागी फितूर की हालत में किया है। मैं तो तुम्हारे साथ पूरी नरमी बरतना चाहता हूँ पर साथ में जिस कुर्सी पर मैं बैठा हूँ उसकी भी कुछ जिम्मेवारियाँ हैं और मैं इस हैसियत से अपना फर्ज अदा करने पर मजबूर हूँ।

अब अगर तुम्हारे केस पर एक सरसरी निगाह डाली जावे तो मैं पाता हूँ कि तुम एक वकील के यहां क्लर्क थे। इसलिए तुम्हारा कहना कोई वजन नहीं रखता कि तुम इस जुर्म के नतायज से वाकिफ नहीं थे। कहा गया है और बार-बार कहा गया है कि तुमने यह सब एक जजवाती झोंक में किया है। पर साथ ही श्रीमती हनीविल से तुम्हारे ताल्लुकात की कहानी भी कही गयी है और उसी कहानी पर तुम्हारे बचाव व तुम पर रहम की बात को मुनहसर किया गया है।

जज साहब ने आगे कहा—तुम दोनों के बीच कोई नाजायज ताल्लुक न रहे हों पर तुम्हारे वकील ने इस बात को रफा-दफा किया है, यह कहकर कि इस औरत की हालत बहुत खस्ता थी। रथ एक शादी-शुदा औरत है और यह जाहिर है कि तुमने यह जुर्म एक और नाजायज काम को बढ़ावा देने के लिए किया था। ऐसी सूरत में तुम्हें माफ करना मेरी राय में दुरुस्त नहीं जबकि तुम्हारे कारनामे हमारे समाज की मोरैलिटी (morality) से मेल नहीं खाते। पूरी की पूरी कहानी शुरू से आखिर तक सड़ी-गली है। तुम्हारे वकील का यह भी कहना है कि तुम्हें सजा देना गैर-इन्साफी है। उनकी यह ख्याली उड़ानें मेरी समझ के दायरे से बाहर हैं।

कानून-कानून है। कानून वही है जो वह रहा है—एक शानदार इमारत हम



सबको पनाह देते वाली, और जिसका हर पत्थर एक दूसरे पर टिका हुआ है। मैं तो कानून को अमल में लाने भर को हूँ। तुमने जो जुर्म किया है वह बहुत संजीदा है। मैं तुम्हारे माफिक फैसला देने के अपने हक का इस्तेमाल नहीं कर सकता। क्योंकि ऐसा करना सोसाइटी की जानिब मेरे फर्ज से मेल नहीं खाता और, ऐसी सूरत में, तुम्हें तीन साल की कैद की सख्त सजा दी जाती है।

इन शब्दों के समाप्त होने तक वही फाल्डर, जो जज महोदय के वक्तव्य के पूरे समय उन्हें एकटक देखता रहा था, अब अपना सिर अपनी छाती पर गिर जाने देता है। जैसे ही वारडर फाल्डर को बाहर ले चलने की तैयारी करते हैं, रथ भी खड़ी हो जाती है। अदालत में एक तरफ का धीमा शोर गूँजने लगता है।

और तब जज महोदय प्रेस रिपोर्टरों को अखबार में रथ का नाम न देने का आदेश देते हैं और रथ को सम्बोधित करते हुए उसे दिलासा देते हैं कि उसका नाम अखबारों में नहीं छपेगा। और फिर, जैसे कुछ हुआ ही न हां, उन्होंने दूसरे मुकद्दमे की पुकार का हुक्म दिया। पर्दा गिरते-गिरते आवाज आती रहती है—

‘बूले के मुकद्दमे में गवाहान पेश हों।’

### तृतीय अंक : दृश्य पहला

किसमस के पहले दिन की शाम। कैदखाने का दृश्य। कुछ कैदी तीर के निशान वाले पीले कपड़े तथा पीली ही टोपियाँ पहने दूर पर एक लाइन में चलते हुए दिखाई देते हैं। जेल के दो वारडर भी नुकीली टोपियाँ तथा तलवार लिए नीली वर्दी में दिखाई दे रहे हैं। और यह रहा जेल के गर्वनर का कमरा जिसमें सीखच्चों वाली दो बड़ी-बड़ी खिड़कियाँ हैं जिनसे कसरत करते हुए कैदी देखे जा सकते हैं। गर्वनर अपनी रायटिंग टेबल के नजदीक खड़ा हुआ धातु की एक भद्दी आरी को उलट-पलट कर देख रहा है। गर्वनर से दो कदम की दूरी पर तना खड़ा है चीफ वारडर बुडर, ऊँचे कद का सफेद मूँछों वाला साठ वर्ष का जवान बुढ़ा।

गर्वनर और बुडर में कुछ कैदियों के बारे में बातचीत होती है। सबसे पहले आरी को उलटते-पलटते गर्वनर बुडर से कहता है यह तो बड़ा विचित्र है। इसे तुमने कहाँ पाया? बुडर बतलाता है कि यह मोआने नामक कैदी के पास बरामद की गई है, हालाँकि यह उसकी चौथी बार है फिर भी उसमें कोई सुधार नहीं हुआ। ये कैदी तो बस नकब लगाने और सेंध लगाकर भाग खड़े होने की बात सोचा करते हैं। उधर वह दूसरे नम्बर का कैदी ओक्लेरी है जो किवाड़ भड़-भड़ाया करता है, उसके बाद है ‘स्टार क्लास’ का फाल्डर और फिर है क्लिण्टन। गर्वनर बीच ही में बोल उठता है। अच्छा वह फिलासफर। मैं आज उसकी आँखों का मुआयना करना चाहता हूँ। तभी बुडर कहता है—श्रीमान जी, ये लोग जानते हैं कि कब और कहाँ भागने को कोशिश की जा रही है और तब सारे में एक सनसनी सी फैल जाती है, एक बेचैनी की लहर—



तभी 'प्रिजन चैपलेन' प्रवेश करता है, उसके काले बाल हैं गम्भीर मुद्रा, चिपके हुए हाँठ, धीमी सुसंस्कृत वाणी। गवर्नर चैपलेन को बहुत-सी विचित्र रस्सियों के टुकड़े, हुक व अन्य औजार दिखाता है और उसी बीच बुडर सैल्यूट करके चला जाता है।

इधर-उधर की बात के बाद गवर्नर चैपलेन को दूसरे दिन क्रिसमस पर अपने साथ खाने की दावत देता है, जो कि चैपलेन द्वारा सधन्यवाद स्वीकार कर ली जाती है।

तब, उस आरी पर निगाह दौड़ाना हुआ, गवर्नर कहता है, इन लोगों को असन्तुष्ट अनुभव कर मुझे भी चिन्ता होती है। पर इस बदमाश को तो सजा देनी ही होगी। चैपलेन कहता है, वास्तव में इन लोगों की बड़ी विकृत इच्छा-शक्ति है। जब तक वह तोड़ नहीं दी जाती, तब तक कुछ नहीं किया जा सकता। तभी बुडर सूचित करता है कि गवर्नर से कोई मिलना चाहता है।

कोकसन का प्रवेश। अभिवादन के पश्चात् वह गवर्नर को बतलाता है कि वह जालसाजी के मुजरिम फाल्डर की दावत कुछ कहना चाहता है। वह कहता है मेरे पास फाल्डर की बहन आयी थी वह बड़ी परेशानी में व उलझन में थी। फाल्डर के माता पिता तो हैं नहीं। इस बहन का पति उसको अपने भाई से मिलने आने नहीं देता था और इसी बहन से पता चला कि इसी फाल्डर की एक दूसरी बहन अपाहिज है। उसकी बहन ने ही मुझे यहाँ भेजा है; और हाँ, वह हमारा जूनियर भी तो था। हम दोनों एक ही चर्च में जाते थे, भला फिर कैसे इन्कार करता? पर गवर्नर कोकसन से कहता है कि जहाँ तक उसका खयाल है अभी कोई भी आदमी फाल्डर से नहीं मिल सकता क्योंकि वह एक महीने की एकाकी कैद पर है। फिर वह जेल डॉक्टर को बुलवाने के लिए घण्टी बजाता है।

इस बीच कोकसन और चैपलेन में फाल्डर के सम्बन्ध में बातचीत होती है। कोकसन चैपलेन को फाल्डर और रथ की कहानी बतलाता है। रथ के जीवन की बीभत्सताओं और इसके एक बेहया, बेवफा, पियक्कड़ आदमी के पल्ले पड़ने की बात बतलाता है और साथ ही फाल्डर के दुर्बल व्यक्तित्व के बारे में कोकसन कहता है कि मैं चाहता हूँ कि उसे यहाँ कुछ सुखद वातावरण मिल जावे। सोचिए न! अकेलापन कितना बुरा होता है। कभी-कभी तो काटने दौड़ता है। भला चंगा आदमी भी पागल और निकम्मा बन जावे। कुत्ता भी पुचकारने से काम करता है और अकेला बाँध देने पर गुर्रता है। फिर आदमी तो आदमी ही है। ओह! यह फाल्डर? कमजोर मस्तिष्क वाला और भावनापूर्ण व्यक्ति और जिसके पास साथ के नाम पर एक बिल्ली भी नहीं। कहीं किसी दिन वह अपना सिर दीवाल से न मार देवे।



तभी डाक्टर प्रवेश करता है। गवर्नर कोकसन की ओर इशारा करते हुए कहता है कि इन महानुभाव का विचार है कि कैदी नम्बर 3007 पर अकेलेपन का प्रभाव अत्यधिक अस्वास्थ्यकर पड़ रहा है, आपकी क्या राय है? जेल के डाक्टर क्लीमेंट्स साहब कहते हैं, ठीक है कि फाल्डर इम अकेलेपन को पसन्द नहीं करता है, पर इससे उसे कुछ नुकसान भी नहीं पहुँच रहा है, और फिर अब कुल एक महीने की बात और है। उसके वजन में भी कोई कमी नहीं आयी है। उसका मस्तिष्क भी ठीक है। हाँ, जरा जल्दी घबड़ा जाता है—‘नरवस नेचर’ का है न! कुछ उदास-उदास, ऊवा-ऊवा-सा जरूर रहता है। लेकिन मैं पूरी देखभाल कर रहा हूँ। तब कोकसन कहता है कि मैंने कुछ ऐसा सोचा था कि शायद हर दिन उसे भली-भाँति देखते हुए भी आप इस बात को नहीं देख पायेंगे। गुस्ताखी के लिए माँफी चाहता हूँ। तब गवर्नर विश्वास दिलाता है कि यदि कैदी के स्वास्थ्य में कोई खराबी पायी जायगी तो फौरन उसकी देखभाल की जावेगी।

फिर, कोकसन मानो अपने विचारों में खोया-सा रहता है। ठीक है, आप तो नहीं देखते वह आपको तकलीफ तो नहीं पहुँचाता, लेकिन मैं नहीं चाहता कि उसकी यह हालत सदा मेरे सिर पर सवार रहे। तब गवर्नर कहता है, श्रीमानजी आप इस मामले को बिना किसी चिन्ता के हम पर छोड़ सकते हैं।

कोकसन फिर, कुछ क्षमा-याचना के लहजे में, कहता है। मैंने सोचा था आप मेरी बात समझेंगे, मैं तो एक सीधा-सादा आदमी हूँ—कभी भी मैंने सच का विरोध नहीं किया। फिर कोकसन, चैपलन की ओर थोड़ा-सा मुड़कर कहता है। इसमें मेरा कोई व्यक्तिगत स्वार्थ नहीं है; और तब वह उन्हें सलाम करके बाहर चल देता है। उस वक्त वे तीनों अधिकारी एक-दूसरे की ओर नहीं देखते हैं; लेकिन उनके चेहरों पर विभिन्न भाव अंकित हैं।

तभी कोकसन अचानक लौट पड़ता है और कुछ क्षमा-याचना करता सा, निवेदन करता है—

“श्रीमान जी, एक बात और है। अगर इजाजत हो तो अर्ज करूँ? मैं जानता हूँ कि मुझे शायद यह प्रार्थना नहीं करनी चाहिये कि इस औरत को उस कैदी से मिला दिया जाये। शायद यह मिलन उन दोनों के लिए सुखद होवे। पर फिर वह भी उस औरत के बारे में सारे दिन सोचता रहेगा। यह सच है कि यह उसकी पत्नी नहीं है। लेकिन फाल्डर तो यहाँ बिल्कुल सुरक्षित है। सच, इन दोनों का इतना दयनीय जोड़ा है, क्या आप नियम का अपवाद नहीं कर सकते?”

तब गवर्नर कुछ ऊवा हुआ-सा कहता है। श्रीमान जी कितनी बार कहा कि मैं नियम नहीं तोड़ सकता। जब तक कि फाल्डर ‘कन्विकट जेल’ में नहीं जाता, किसी को भी उससे मिलने न दिया जायेगा। कोकसन तब कहता है। अब समझा, खेद है, आपको इतना कष्ट दिया और फिर बाहर चला जाता है।



कोकसन के चले जानै पर, चैपलैन अपने कंधे को झटका देते हुए कहता है। वास्तव में वेचारा एक सीधा-सच्चा आदमी है। अच्छा डाक्टर क्लीमेंट्स हमारे साथ ही चलकर खाना खाइये।

चैपलेन और डाक्टर चले जाते हैं। पर्दा गिरते समय हम देखते हैं कि गवर्नर एक ठण्डी साँस लेकर अपनी मेज पर बैठ जाता है और हाथ में कलम उठा लेता है।

### तृतीय अंक : दृश्य दूसरा

कैदखाने के नीचे के बरामदे का दृश्य—जहाँ से चार कोठरियों के किवाड़ दीख रहे हैं। हरेक किवाड़ पर झाँकने के लिए एक गोल छेद है, जो कि उसमें लगे हुए गोल ढक्कन द्वारा खोला व बन्द किया जा सकता है।

‘बारडर इन्स्ट्रक्टर’ एक कोठरी से बाहर आता है। जब वह ओक्लेरी नामक कैदी से बात कर रहा होता है उसी समय किसी के आते हुए पद-चापों की आवाज सुनायी देती है। गवर्नर के पूछताछ करने पर इन्स्ट्रक्टर बताता है कि कैदी नं० 3007 अपने काम में पिछड़ा हुआ है। गवर्नर हामी में सिर हिलाता हुआ आगे बढ़ जाता है और इन्स्ट्रक्टर चला जाता है। गवर्नर मुआने से, आरी दिखाते हुए कहता है, तुम्हें इसके बारे में कुछ कहना है। मुआने उत्तर देता है कि इससे मेरा समय कट जाता है। गवर्नर उससे कहता है कि अगर उसका अपराध क्षमा कर दिया जाये तो फिर कभी वह ऐसा करने की कोशिश तो नहीं करेगा। परन्तु मुआने ऐसी प्रतिज्ञा करने में असमर्थ है। अतः उसको दो दिन अकेले कोठरी में केवल रोटी व पानी पर रहने की सजा दी जाती है। गवर्नर क्लिपटन की कोठरी में जाता है। क्लिपटन गवर्नर से शिकायत करता है कि उसके बराबर वाले कैदी के कारण उसकी नींद उचट जाती है, क्योंकि वह हमेशा दरवाजे को पीटा करता है। गवर्नर ओक्लेरी की कोठरी में जाता है और उससे दरवाजे पीटने के बारे में पूछता है। आयरिश निवासी ओक्लेरी कहता है कि वह सदा ही स्थिर नहीं रह सकता— इसलिए वह ऐसा करता है।

गवर्नर वुडर को डाक्टर (क्लीमेंट्स) के पास भेजता है और स्वयम् फाल्डर की कोठरी में चला जाता है। जैसे ही वह दरवाजा खोलता है, फाल्डर जो कि दरवाजे से टिका खड़ा होता है, झटके से हट जाता है। गवर्नर वास्तव में फाल्डर को देखकर दुःखी होता है। वह उससे अपने उन निजी मामलों को भुला देने को कहता है, जो उसे (फाल्डर को) उदास व परेशान किये रहते हैं।

फाल्डर की तबियत सदा गिरी-गिरी-सी रहती है, और हालत घबड़ाई हुई— उसी समय डाक्टर आते हैं—गवर्नर फाल्डर को अपनी कोठरी में वापस जाने को कहता है। उसके बाद डाक्टर से कैदी को देखने के लिए कहता है। डाक्टर ऐसा ही करता है और देखने के बाद वापस आता है। वह कोई खास रिपोर्ट नहीं देता है। वह कहता है कि यह कैदी भी अन्य कैदियों जैसा घबड़ाया हुआ है—उसके वजन में कोई कमी नहीं है, उसकी आँखों में कोई लालाही नहीं है, उसकी बाड़ी ठीक है और



वह ठीक से बातचीत भी करता है। गवर्नर क्लीमेंट्स (डाक्टर) से कहता है कि क्या फाल्डर की हालत सदा गिरी-गिरी नहीं रहती है? डाक्टर जवाब देता है कि अगर गवर्नर की ऐसी ही स्वाहिन हो तो वह उस नवयुवक कैदी के बारे में रिपोर्ट बना सकता है परन्तु इसके साथ-साथ उसे अन्य कैदियों के बारे में रिपोर्ट देनी होगी। दुःखी दिल उदास गवर्नर वहाँ से आहिस्ते-आहिस्ते चल पड़ता है, और पर्दा गिर जाता है।

### तृतीय अंक : दृश्य तीसरा

फाल्डर की कोठरी !—जेल की कोठरी : तेरह फीट लम्बी, सात फीट चौड़ी और नौ फीट ऊँची, गोलाकार छतवाली, सफेद पुती जगह, कोठरी का फर्श चमकदार काली ईंटों का है। सिरे की दीवाल के मध्य काफी ऊँचाई पर सीखचों वाली एक खिड़की है और उसी के ऊपर एक रोशनदान भी। सामने की दीवाल में एक सिरे पर संकरा दरवाजा है। एक कोने में चटाई और विस्तर लिपटे रखे हैं। विस्तर में हैं—दो कम्बल, दो चादरें और एक पलंग की चादर। उन्हीं के ऊपर चौथाई-वृत्ताकार का शैल्फ है जिस पर एक बाइबिल तथा कुछ अन्य छोटी-मोटी धार्मिक पुस्तकें पिरैमिड के आकार में ढेर की हुई रखी हैं। वहीं पर एक काला बाल-ब्रुश, एक टूथ-ब्रुश और थोड़ा-सा साबुन रखा है। एक दूसरे कोने में लकड़ी की चारपाई खड़ी है। खिड़की के नीचे एक अंधेरा-सा रोशनदान है, एक दूसरा दरवाजे के ऊपर भी है।

फाल्डर की कृति—एक कमीज जिसमें वह काज कर रहा है, एक लकड़ी की मेज से कुछ ऊपर दीवाल पर एक कील से टंगी है, और इसी मेज पर 'लोरेनाडून' नामक उपन्यास खुला पड़ा है। दरवाजे के पास वाले भीतरी कोने में एक मोटे काँच का पर्दा है, जो करीब एक फुट वर्ग का है और दीवाल में होकर आने वाले गैस-जैट को ढके हुए है। वहाँ पर लकड़ी का एक स्टूल भी दीखता है, जिसके नीचे एक जोड़ी जूते रखे हुए हैं, खिड़की के नीचे चमकदार टीन के तीन डिब्बे रखे हुए हैं।

दिन के तेजी से ढलते प्रकाश में फाल्डर, पूरे मोजे पहने हुए, स्थिर खड़ा हुआ दिखाई देता है, उसका सिर दरवाजे की ओर झुका हुआ है—मानो कि वह कुछ ध्यान से सुन रहा है, फिर दरवाजे के थोड़ा और निकट खिसकता है, पर उसके पैरों से कोई ध्वनि उत्पन्न नहीं होती, वह दरवाजे पर आकर रुक जाता है। वह बाहर की छोटी से छोटी और धीमी से धीमी आवाज को सुनने का असफल प्रयास करता हुआ अत्यधिक विह्वल दिखाई देता है। तब वह एकदम तनकर सीधा खड़ा हो जाता है—जैसे कि उसके कानों में कोई आवाज आयी हो और फिर पूर्णतः गतिविहीन, स्तब्ध-सा खड़ा रह जाता है।

तब, एक भारी आह खींचकर, वह अपने काम की ओर बढ़ जाता है और अपना सिर नीचा किया हुआ उस कमीज के कपड़े को घूरता हुआ खड़ा रहता है,



फिर कुछ सोचकर कमीज में एक-दो टाँके लगाता है; और उसके हाव-भाव से कुछ ऐसा प्रतीत होता है मानो कि अवसाद और निराशा की गहराई में खोया हुआ कोई व्यक्ति हर टाँके के साथ जीवन-चेतना से जीवित हो उठा हो। फिर एकदम मुड़कर वह अपना सिर हिलाते हुए, कोठरी में इधर से उधर और उधर से इधर भारी कदमों से घूमने लगता है—जैसे कि कोई पशु अपने पिंजरे में घूम रहा हो।

फाल्डर पुनः दरवाजे के समीप रुक जाता है—कुछ सुनता-सा दीखता है तभी अचानक अपने हाथों की हथेलियों को दरवाजे पर रखकर अपनी उँगलियाँ फैला देता है, और दरवाजे के सींखचों से अपना सिर टिका लेता है। शीघ्र ही उससे हटकर धीरे-धीरे खिड़की की ओर बढ़ जाता है और दीवारों के डिस्टेंपर की रेखा पर उँगली फेरता हुआ चलने लगता है। फिर वह खिड़की के नीचे रुक जाता है और टीन के डिब्बों में से एक ढक्कन उठाकर उसके अन्दर झाँकता है—मानो कि अपने ही चेहरे को अपना साथी बनाना चाहता हो।

अब तो बहुत कुछ अँधेरा हो गया है—लगभग रात ही। अचानक ढक्कन फाल्डर के हाथ से गिर जाता है ! और झन। झन खनन खन ! की आवाज होती है—एकमात्र आवाज जो उस मौन शान्ति को थोड़ी देर के लिए तोड़ती है और फाल्डर उसी स्थान पर खड़ा-खड़ी दीवाल पर टँगी कमीज को घूरने लगता है, जो कि अँधेरे में अपेक्षाकृत सफेद है; और उसे कुछ ऐसा महसूस होता है जैसे वह किसी व्यक्ति या वस्तु को देख रहा हो। तेजी के साथ तभी 'क्लिक' की आवाज होती है, क्योंकि मोटे काँच के परदे के पीछे कोठरी की रोशनी का स्विच ऑन कर दिया जाता है। कोठरी धुंधले प्रकाश से चमक उठती है और फाल्डर हाँफता-सा प्रतीत होता है।

बहुत दूर से एक आवाज मोटी धातु की चादर को धीरे-धीरे पीटने की सी अचानक सुनाई देती है। इस अप्रत्याशित झन-झन खन-खन की आवाज को सहन न करता हुआ-सा फाल्डर एकदम पीछे को सिकुड़ कर खड़ा हो जाता है। लेकिन आवाज बढ़ती ही जाती है—जैसे अस्त्र-शस्त्रों से लदी कोई फौजी वन्द गाड़ी कोठरी की ओर बढ़ती चली आ रही हो और धीरे-धीरे यह आवाज उसे मन्त्रमुग्ध करती सी प्रतीत होती है। तब वह बहुत चुपके से दरवाजे की ओर खिसकने लगता है। अब 'खनन-खन, झनन-झन' की आवाज, एक कोठरी से दूसरी कोठरी की ओर बढ़ती हुई और निकट चलती चली आती है। इसी समय फाल्डर के हाथ कुछ इस प्रकार हिलते-डुलते दिखाई देते हैं मानो कि उस ध्वनि से उसका एकाकीपन पहले से ही संयोजित हो गया हो; और यह ध्वनि तब तक बढ़ती ही चली जाती है तब तक कि वह उसकी



कोठरी में घुसकर समा नहीं जाती और तब वह अचानक अपनी दृढ़ता से बँधी मुट्ठियों को ऊपर उठाता है, फिर बहुत जोरों से हाँफता हुआ वह अपने-आपको एक झटके से दरवाजे पर टिका देता है और उस पर मुक्के मारने लगता है—उसे झड़-झड़ाने लगता है। तभी पर्दा गिरता है, कुछ देर तक आवाज सुनाई देती रहती है।

### चतुर्थ अंक

दो साल बाद फिर कोकसन के कमरे का एक दृश्य—माचं के महीने की सुबह हे दस बजने में अभी कुछ मिनट बाकी हैं। स्विडिल जो अब काफी बड़ा हो गया है, और चेहरे पर मूँछे निकल आयी हैं, अकेला ही दपतर ठीक-ठाक कर रहा है।

रथ हनीविल वहाँ आती है और दरवाजे के रास्ते पर खड़ी हो जाती है। उसकी बात-चीत से पता चलता है कि फाल्डर को रिहा कर दिया गया है। स्विडिल मानव-प्रकृति पर कुछ अच्छी टिप्पणियाँ करता है। उसी समय कोकसन का अन्दर प्रवेश होता है।

कोकसन के पूछताछ करने पर रथ अपनी दो वर्ष पूर्व की जिन्दगी की झाँकी प्रस्तुत करती है। वह कहती है कि वह अपने पति के साथ न ठहर सकी, उसने उसे छोड़ दिया है और वह बाल-बच्चों सहित चली आई। एक दिन पहले ही वह फाल्डर से मिली है। फाल्डर बहुत कमजोर हो गया है और अभी तक उसे कोई रोजगार न मिल सका है। वह जब रिहा हुआ था तभी उसे एक जगह मिली थी परन्तु वह वहाँ केवल तीन हफ्ते ही टिक सका। उसके रिश्तेदारों को उससे कोई हमदर्दी नहीं है, रथ हनीविल स्वयम् भी उसकी कुछ मदद करने योग्य नहीं है। हनीविल के साथ शादी करने के कारण उसके स्वयं के रिश्तेदार उससे सख्त नाराज हैं और अब उसका पति उससे बहुत बुरा बर्ताव करने लगा था, साथ ही उसके बच्चों तक को भी मारता-पीटता था। अपने पति को छोड़ने के बाद उसने कमीजें सी-सी कर अपनी रोटी कमाने चाही पर अभाग्यवश वह बहुत थोड़ा कमा पायी। वह देर तक काम करती थी, फिर भी उसके बच्चे भूखे रहते थे।

रथ कोकसन से प्रार्थना करती है कि फाल्डर को फिर से एक बार नौकरी दे दी जाये। इस समय रथ की दर्द भरी आवाज एवं दयनीय चेहरे को देखकर कोकसन के लिए बिल्कुल असम्भव था कि उसका दिल पिघलन पड़े। वह रथ से कहता है कि वह अपने मालिकान से बातचीत करेगा पर अभी कोई वायदा नहीं कर सकता है। वह उस औरत का पता ले लेता है और उससे कहता है कि वह फाल्डर को यहाँ न भेजे जब तक कि उसे बुलाया न जाये। रथ चली जाती है।

कोकसन स्विडिल को अन्दर बुलाता है और उससे कहता है कि यदि रिचांड क्लर्की के पद के लिए यहाँ आये तो वह उसे अभी लटकाये रखे। उसके बाद वह उससे कहता है कि अगर फाल्डर यहाँ आये तो वह उससे अच्छा व्यवहार करे।



इतने में ही फाल्डर वहाँ आता है। वह दुबला, पीला व कुछ बुढ़ा-सा नजर आ रहा था। उसकी आँखें थकी हुई अस्थिर मालूम पड़ रही थीं। हिचकिचाहट के साथ फाल्डर कोकसन से हाथ मिलाता है। वह मालिकों के दरवाजे की तरफ देखता है। कोकसन उससे कहता है कि अभी उसके मालिक नहीं आये हैं। फाल्डर कोकसन के पास पड़ी हुई कुर्सी पर बैठ जाता है।

फाल्डर कहता है कि वह केवल एक मौका चाहता है। उसे अपने किये अपराध पर तो हजार गुनी सजा मिल चुकी है। सब कहते हैं उसका वजन कैदखाने के अन्दर अधिक था। पर वे उसके दिल व दिमाग को नहीं तोल सकते हैं। रिहा होने के बाद उसे एक जगह मिली थी और उसने सोचा था कि सब ठीक-ठाक हो जायेगा पर अभाग्यवश एक दिन एक अन्य क्लर्क को उसकी बीती जिन्दगी के विषय में पता लग जाने के कारण वह वहाँ न टिक सका। उसके बाद उसे एक छोटी-मोटी जगह मिली पर वह वहाँ भी न रह सका। क्योंकि उसके सामने यह समस्या थी कि वह अपना पूर्व परिचय क्या दे।

फाल्डर अपनी जिन्दगी के बारे में बताया गया। उसने कहा कि उसकी एक बहिन को तपेदिक है। दूसरी बहिन अपने पति के डर के कारण उसकी सहायता करने में असमर्थ है। उसका पति फाल्डर को पच्चीस पाउण्ड देकर केनाडा भेजकर छुटकारा पाना चाहता है। फाल्डर ने उसकी इस भेंट को स्वीकार नहीं किया। और वह चला आया। उसने उस हफ्ते अपनी तीन रातें एक पार्क में काटीं। परन्तु रथ से मिलने पर वह अपने को एक भिन्न व्यक्ति सा अनुभव करने लगा।

कोकसन और फाल्डर के बातचीत करने के दौरान ही, दोनों मालिक आ जाते हैं, नमस्ते आदि होती है—इसके बाद कोकसन फाल्डर से क्लर्क के कमरे में चले जाने को कहता है। कोकसन जेम्स की तरफ मुड़ता है और कहता है कि फाल्डर को अपने किये पर बहुत पश्चाताप है इसलिए उसको दूसरा मौका दे दिया जाये। पहले तो जेम्स अपनी बात पर दृढ़ रहा परन्तु कोकसन की बातचीत से उसका दिल भी पिघल पड़ा। जेम्स ने यह जानने की इच्छा प्रकट की कि फाल्डर जब से जेल से छूटकर आया है तब से क्या करता रहा है। कोकसन ने कहा उसे एक-दो जगह मिलीं पर वह वहाँ रह न सका क्योंकि वह जेल में रह चुका है।

जेम्स तब उस औरत के बारे में पूछता है, जिससे फाल्डर का पहले ताल्लुक था। कोकसन कहता है कि फाल्डर की उससे मुलाकात हुई है। वह अपने पति के साथ नहीं रह रही है, पर वह यह नहीं जानता है कि फाल्डर उसके साथ रह रहा है या नहीं। वह कहता कि आज ही सुबह वह औरत यहाँ आयी थी। जेम्स यह नहीं पसन्द करता है कि वह नौजवान (फाल्डर) एक शादीशुदा औरत से कोई ताल्लुक



रखे। वह कोकसन से कहता है कि फाल्डर तब तक उसके दफ्तर में नहीं आ सकता जब तक कि वह अपने ताल्लुकात को बिलकुल साफ नहीं कर देगा।

अब फाल्डर को जेम्स से मिलने का मौका दिया जाता है। जेम्स कहता है कि वह उसे फिर से एक बार मौका देना चाहता है। वह फाल्डर को सलाह देता है कि वह अपने मन से उन सब धारणाओं को निकाल दे जिनके द्वारा वह सोचता हो कि उसके साथ अन्याय किया गया। जेम्स इसके साथ यह भी कहता है कि ऐसी कोई हस्ती नहीं है; जो जुर्म करके भाग सके। फाल्डर कहता है कि इन सब बातों को सोचने के लिए उसे कैदखाने में काफी समय मिल चुका है। वह कहता है कि अब वह इस निष्कर्ष पर पहुँचा है कि यदि अपराधियों को कैदखाने में रखकर किसी ऐसे शख्स की देख-रेख में रखा जाये जो उनके साथ सहानुभूतिपूर्ण व्यवहार करे तो उनमें से एक-चौथाई भी दुबारा वहाँ (जेल) लौटकर न जायें।

परन्तु जेम्स फाल्डर को सलाह देता है कि वह अपने उन सब विचारों को एक तरफ छोड़कर भविष्य की ओर देखे। वह कहता है कि अब उस नौजवान (फाल्डर) को अपनी पिछली जिन्दगी को भुलाकर ऐसा कुछ करना है, जिससे वह अपना नाम कमा सके। वह फाल्डर से कहता है कि वह यह वचन दे दे कि अब वह रथ से ऐसा कोई ताल्लुक नहीं रखेगा, जो कि उसके भविष्य के रास्ते में बाधक सिद्ध हो। इसी शर्त पर वह फिर से दफ्तर में काम करने आ सकता है।

फाल्डर कहता है कि वह रथ को नहीं छोड़ सकता है क्योंकि उसके लिए रथ सब कुछ और रथ के लिए वह सब कुछ है। जेम्स कहता है कि रथ स्वयं भी ऐसा सोच सकती है। रथ फाल्डर को कभी बर्बाद नहीं करना चाहेगी। यह एक दूसरी बात है कि किसी सूरत से रथ की शादी उसके साथ हो जाये। फाल्डर कहता है कि यह उसका कसूर नहीं है, अगर रथ के पास पैसा होता तो वह आसानी से तलाक ले सकती थी।

वाल्टर बोलने ही वाला होता है, परन्तु कोकसन उसे बीच में ही रोक लेता है। वह कहता है कि यह बात बहुत दूर की है, इस विषय पर अभी नहीं सोचा जा सकता है। खैर! वाल्टर फाल्डर से कहता है कि अगर रथ से उसका सम्बन्ध स्थापित हो सकता है तो वह उसकी पूरी मदद करने के लिए तैयार है। फाल्डर आज्ञा लेकर इशारे से सड़क पर खड़ी हुई रथ को बुलाता है। कोकसन मालिकों से कहता है कि रथ अब ऐसी नहीं जैसा कि उसे होना चाहिए था—जब कि फाल्डर उससे दूर जेल में था।

रथ अन्दर आती है। जेम्स उससे कहता है कि फाल्डर को उसने वचन दे दिया है कि अगर वह फिर से अपनी नई जिन्दगी शुरू कर दे तो वह दफ्तर वापिस आ सकता है। फाल्डर रथ से कहता है कि वाल्टर ने उसे आश्वासन दिया है कि



वह उसे तलाक देने में मदद करेगा। परन्तु जेम्स का कहना है कि ऐसा नहीं हो सकता है। जेम्स रथ से कहता है कि वह फाल्डर को छोड़ दे। यदि वह उसके भविष्य के रास्ते में रोड़ा बनकर नहीं खड़ी होना चाहती है। परन्तु फाल्डर कहता है कि ऐसा नहीं हो सकता है। वह दुबारा कहता है कि उन लोगों के बीच ऐसी कोई बात नहीं है। वह जेम्स से यह भी वायदा करता है कि जब तक तलाक के सब मामलात तय नहीं हो जाते हैं, वे एक दूसरे से अलग रहेंगे। फाल्डर के शब्दों को सुनकर जेम्स रथ की ओर मुड़ता है और कहता है कि अब फाल्डर का भविष्य उसी के हाथों में है। अन्त में रथ कहती है कि वह जी-जान से फाल्डर के भले के लिए जितना अधिक से अधिक कर सकेगी, करेगी।

किसी के पदचापों की आवाज आती है। कोकसन रथ को सलाह देता है कि वह शीघ्र ही क्लर्क के कमरे में चली जाये। फाल्डर भी रथ के पीछे-पीछे चल पड़ता है और कोकसन दरवाजा बन्द कर देता है।

गुप्तचर सारजेन्ट विस्टर वहाँ प्रवेश करता है। वह कहता है कि वह उसी क्लर्क की तलाश में यहाँ आया है, जिसको उसने दो-ढाई बरस पहले इसी कमरे में पकड़ा था। कोकसन कहता है, अब वे उस (फाल्डर) के लिए जिम्मेवार नहीं हैं। विस्टर उसे सूचित करता है कि फाल्डर ने बहुत दिनों से अपनी कोई रिपोर्ट नहीं दी है। वह यह भी बताता है कि उसने फिर नौकरी पाने के लिए अपना गलत परिचय देकर जाल-साजी की है, जिसके खातिर वह उसे पकड़ना चाहता है।

कोकसन गुप्तचर से कहता है कि इस समय वे लोग अपने काम में बहुत मशगूल हैं, अगर विस्टर फिर किसी अन्य समय वहाँ आये तो वे उसे कुछ बता सकेंगे। जेम्स कहता है कि अगर गुप्तचर फाल्डर को पकड़ना चाहता है तो वह स्वयं ही उनकी बिना किसी सहायता उसे ढूँढ़ निकाले। जैसे ही विस्टर बोलने को हुआ उसकी निगाह मेज के ऊपर रखी फाल्डर की टोपी पर पड़ी। अपराधियों के छिपाने के खिलाफ गुप्तचर ने उन्हें चेतावनी दी। जेम्स ने दृढ़ता से जवाब दिया कि वह किसी अपराधी को नहीं छिपाये हुए है।

विस्टर यह कहता हुआ कि अब वह उन लोगों को अधिक परेशान नहीं करना चाहता है, जाने के लिए मुड़ गया। इसके बजाय कि वह बाहरी दफ्तर की ओर जाये, क्लर्क के कमरे में घुस जाता है। वह अन्दर जाता है और जल्दी फाल्डर को अपनी बांह में दबाये हुए बाहर निकल आता है। वाल्टर गुप्तचर से इस समय फाल्डर को छोड़ने को कहता है, पर गुप्तचर कहता है कि इसके लिए वह जिम्मेदारी नहीं ले सकता है। फाल्डर अपना सिर ऊपर उठाये हुए तेजी से बाहर निकल जाता है, विस्टर भी उसके साथ घसिटता-सा चला जाता है।



पत्थर के जीनों पर किसी के उलटने की आवाज आती है। अचानक ही एक जोर से धमाके की आवाज आती है, विस्टर जोर से चिल्ला पड़ता है। इसी बीच रथ बेहोश हो जाती है। बाहर का दरवाजा खुलता है। विस्टर और स्विडिल किसी को लादे हुए आते दिखाई पड़ते हैं। रथ को छोड़कर सभी वहाँ पर आ जाते हैं। विस्टर उन लोगों को सूचित करता है कि फाल्डर ने नीचे कूदकर अपनी गर्दन तोड़ली है। स्विडिल फौरन ही डाक्टर को बुलाने के लिए भेजा जाता है। जैसे ही रथ को होश आता है वह उसी ओर बढ़ जाती है जिधर से आवाज आ रही है। वह फाल्डर के शरीर के पास घुटने के बल बैठ जाती है। दूसरे ही क्षण वह चिल्ला पड़ती है 'वह मर गया?' कोकसन कहता है, "अब उसे कोई भी छू नहीं सकता है; अब वह सदा के लिए प्रभु 'ईसू-महीस' की गोद में सुरक्षित है।"



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Gandhi Memorial College Of Education Bantalab Jammu



Small text: ... Education, Bantelab Jammu

# SHAKESPEARE'S WORKS

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|----------------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. The Tempest                   | Dr. S. K. Banerji   |
| 2. Othello                       | Dr. S. K. Banerji   |
| 3. As You Like It                | N. M. Kulkarni      |
| 4. Macbeth                       | Dr. S. K. Banerji   |
| 5. King Henry V                  | Dr. S. K. Banerji   |
| 6. Cymbeline                     | Dr. S. K. Banerji   |
| 7. Hamlet                        | Dr. S. K. Banerji   |
| 8. Romeo and Juliet              | Dr. S. K. Banerji   |
| 9. Love's Labour's Lost          | Dr. S. K. Banerji   |
| 10. Antony and Cleopatra         | Dr. D. K. Chopra    |
| 11. Twelfth Night                | J. Lahiri           |
| 12. King Lear                    | B. L. Samdani       |
| 13. King Henry IV, Part I        | Dr. D. K. Chopra    |
| 14. Coriolanus                   | Dr. S. K. Banerji   |
| 15. Julius Caesar                | Mathur & Lahiri     |
| 16. The Merchant of Venice       | J. Lahiri           |
| 17. A Midsummer Night's<br>Dream | Dr. Sastri & Lahiri |
| 18. Much Ado About Nothing       | Lahiri & Srivastava |
| 19. Measure for Measure          | N. K. Das Gupta     |
| 20. Timon of Athens              | Dr. D. K. Chopra    |
| 21. The Winter's Tale            | N. K. Das Gupta     |
| 22. The Sonnets                  | N. K. Das Gupta     |
| 23. King Henry IV, Part II       | Dr. D. K. Chopra    |
| 24. King Richard II              | Dr. B. B. Jain      |
| 25. King Richard III             | Dr. B. B. Jain      |

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